The Thurston County Rainbow Coalition Presents

Works In Progress

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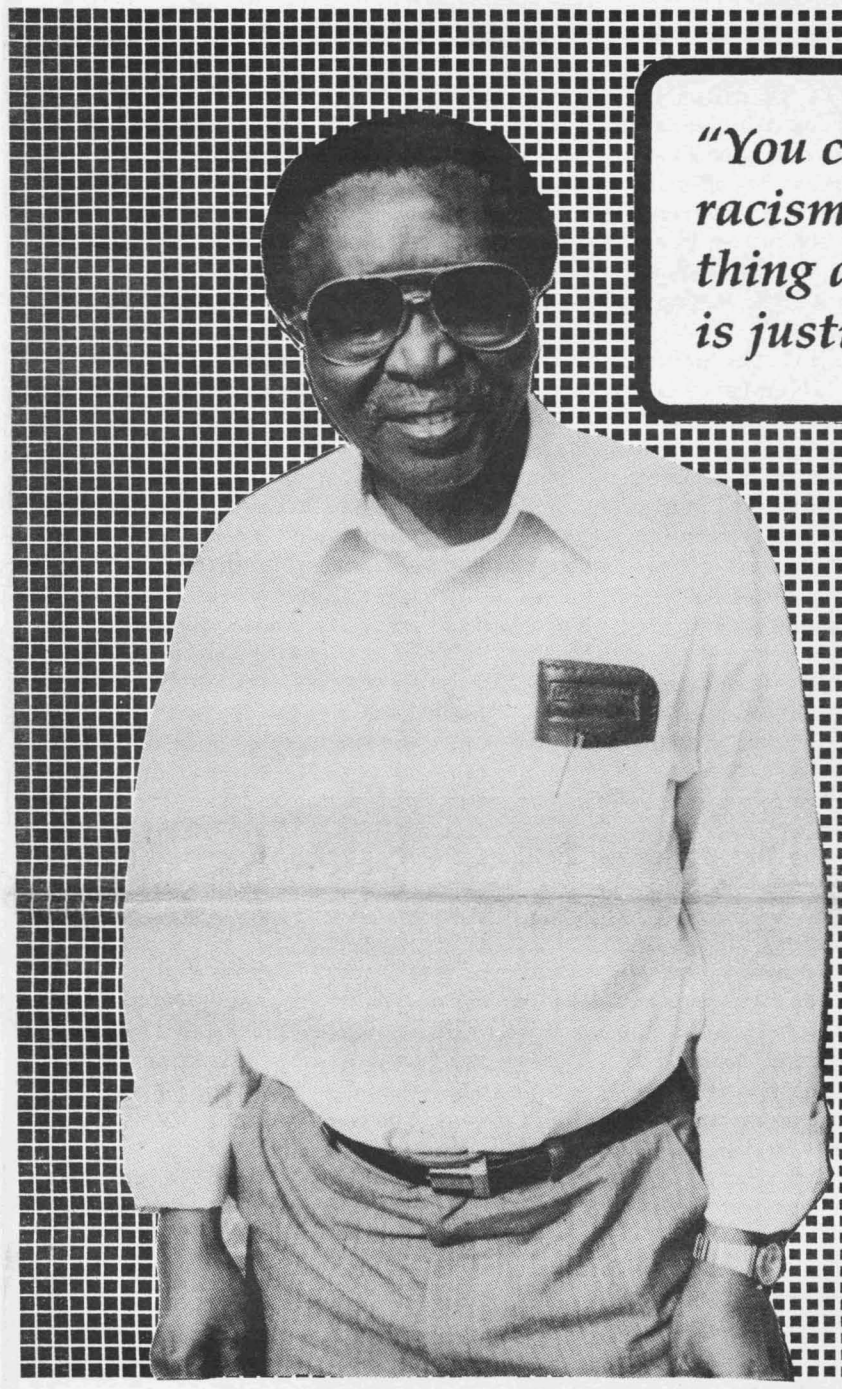

"You can't fight racism with racism, and do exactly the same thing and think that your racism is justified..."

An Interview With ANC Member Fred Dube

A couple of days ago ***Works in Progress*** *staff member 'Ace' Goodman talked to Fred Dube, longtime member of the* ***African National Congress****, which seeks the elimination of Aprartheid in South Africa.*

Goodman: How did you get involved with the ANC?

Fred Dube: It was almost a thing that was in the family. My uncle was already in the ANC. He was the first president of the African National Congress, formed in 1912. And my mother more than my father was an active member. But apart from that, there were many other organizations when I was in my teens in South Africa. For instance, there was the Unity Movement, which was Marxist, but more influenced by Trotsky. The problem, insofar as I was concerned, was: they were talking good theory, but when they came down to earth they did absolutely nothing. Up in the air. So when I finally decided to go into the African National Congress, it was because the African National Congress was dealing with the serious problems of the people. I still had a number of reservations about the African National Congress then. But in spite of the reservations, I thought that they were doers. And as a kid I wasn't impressed by the mere talking. I was impressed by doing.

What were the reservations I had? In South Africa you must understand , when you're young, you see things in black- white dichotomy because that's how the society presents itself. The people who are shitting on you all the time are the police and invariably they're white. When you go to the bus, at the time before the Afrikanners took over and divided the buses, the bus conductor who was bullshitting you, was white. We were already living in black ghettos, and when you pay the rent you're paying to a white person who's also shitting you around. So to you, everything is black and white. The ANC in 1953 has this congress alliance and they had the whites there. I couldn't understand this, you see. It was only after joining, and beginning to get closer to these people, talking to these people, that I began to understand that it is not every white who is that way. Therefore, when I became far more matured I began to understand— mixing more among whites and finding the variations amongst them— that the ANC was making a lot of sense. You can't fight racism with racism and do exactly the same thing and think that your racism is justified and the other racism is not justified. Either racism is evil or it's not. So if it is evil it does not matter which end it comes from, it is still evil.

Goodman: I've talked to a lot of whites in South Africa, older whites, who can envision a gigantic race war in South Africa's future, where they would be out shooting anybody who was black. They can envision *that*, and talk about *that*, but the idea of a democratic South African government that was mostly black, that was incomprehensible to them... it was like if you picked up a rock and told them, when I let go of this rock it's going to fall *upon me*.. It was impossible to them.

Fred Dube: I can understand that. Many of them believe their position in society and their privileges in South African society are predetermined by God. Now they can't envision anything that is not like that because to them that is anti-God. These people, particularly the Calvinists, believe that everything was predestined. But those are not the ones that scare me, because those who are like that I think will accept change as predestined too, when it does happen. They will resist that change, but when it happens I think they will accept it as predestined. It is the English-speaking people that are not going to accept, not in large numbers, but there will be some who will not accept change into a democratic society, because that democratic society would mean, all privileges are gone and everybody is going to be equal with everybody. I don't think that they are able to deal with that.

Goodman: When I was hitchiking through South Africa, I was always hearing complaints about all these 'terrible myths' that the American media was spreading about South Africa, and one was that all the whites were wealthy. And I'd be in this really nice car, going to somebody's really nice farm or house, with a bunch of servants, and I'd gotten to visit SOWETO, and they're telling me how the whites aren't wealthy...

Fred Dube: Even the poor white in South Africa is so spoiled that he expects to have a black servant. So you are not telling a lie about that, it's true. They think that God gave them that provilege, that it's not something that came from the barrel of the gun. But the truth is it came from the barrel of the gun.

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From The Editor-

Coming Up: Enemies of Thurston County Trading Cards?

by Goodman

Some of us working on this paper had this idea that it would be fun to include "Thurston County Pain-in-the-Neck Trading Cards" in a future issue. The idea is we would print up on card stock these "trading cards" with pictures and information about various local political hacks and pinheads (I'm sure you can think of some people who would be appropriate) and staple one card in each copy of the paper. It would be educational and fun for the entire family ("I'll trade you a Bob Williams for a Sandy Mackie"). A more positive slant would be to do cards featuring activists that are doing really positive work. It would mean a hell of a lot of stapling on our part, but it sounds cool. You might want to drop us a line, if you have suggestions for whom to put on the cards.

Anyway, welcome to the first issue of what I call "the paper." I wanted to call the paper **Rediscovering Thurston County**, but that got voted down, and **Works in Progress** is all we could come up with by press time. (Oh well, a rose by any other name...) "The paper" is a new Thurston area alternative paper, designed to fill the gap left when all those other local alternative papers (like the **South Sound Alliance**) went under. We hope to use it as a vehicle for community activists to keep in touch with each other, and pass along information and inspiration to local citizens who believe in subversive ideas like human rights, sexual equality, protecting the environment, etc.

My name is Goodman, and I'm the editor of the paper. Greeners may know me as the founder of **The Evergreen Free-Press**, the campus underground rag of The Evergreen State College. This paper will be pretty different than that one.

I'm a member of the Thurston County Rainbow Coalition, which is the publisher of this paper. Some folks have suggested to me that I should have started an "independent" paper, rather than affiliating it with the the Rainbow Coalition. I disagree. I have a progressive political viewpoint, which will be reflected in any project that I'm a part of, and I feel I might as well be open about that and work with those who share those views, rather than try to give the appearance of being "impartial." Besides, as useful as a community paper can be, I think what is more urgently needed is stronger working ties between community activists, and my dream is that the Rainbow will be able to utilize this paper as one tool to strengthen those links. Rainbow certainly won't be able to do it alone (notwithstanding it's very limited resources), but I think it can be done and needs to be done.

While we're talking about the Rainbow Coalition, let me mention that *THE VIEWS THAT APPEAR IN THIS PAPER DO NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT THE VIEWS OF THE THURSTON COUNTY RAINBOW COALITION. IN FACT, THE VIEWS **IN THIS COLUMN** DON'T NECESSARILY REFLECT THE VIEWS OF THE THURSTON COUNTY RAINBOW COALITION.* This is a community newspaper, being published by the T.C.R.C. as a public service to inform and entertain the citizenry. In fact, it's a great educational tool for the Rainbow too, since there's all kinds of things going on locally that we've been unaware of until somebody sent in an article on it. For example, I didn't know what WIDCO was until I read Regina's great article on pages 6 and 7.

Some of you may have caught our previous issue (Volume 1, Number 0) last month, and you'll notice that the paper has greatly improved. Our last issue was "practice," to allow us to build a decent head of steam for our official debut this month. Obviously there's still room for improvement.

If you've got complaints or suggestions about the paper, send them to the address at the top of this page. I'd especially like to build a strong letters page, that can be a real community forum for exchanging views. Our community calender is relatively lame this issue, so if you know of an event that should be in the next issue, give Sylvia Smith a call at 459-3625. Also, without money, this paper won't last until autumn, so if you like the concept, be sure and send us some dough and subscribe. Free copies are distributed throughout the county, but we'll be distributing in different areas each month, so subscribing will be the only sure way to find the latest issue.

The Jesse Jackson column that appears in this issue is distributed by the Los Angeles Times Syndicate, and even though we're published by the Rainbow, we've got to pay to run it like everybody else. Let us know what you think of it. If we can scrape us some bucks we may carry Alexander Cockburn's column *Ashes and Diamonds* regularly. Locally, Tom Freeman is doing a regular column called *Patchworks* (see page 10), and we may be able to interest others in writing for the paper.

Well, that's it for now. Oh yeah, as this goes to press I'm looking for work and about broke, so if anybody out there knows of a job, particularly one using Macintosh computers, give me a call at 866-7096, or 943-3895. One advantageous of being on the paper's staff is being able to run "classified ads" like that for free.

Have a very pleasant month.

We Need to Stop Exporting Logging Jobs

by James C. Boling

I was asked to respond to the log problem and the spotted owl. What I write is my own opinion.

I have worked in the door business for 31 years and I am now the Business Agent for Local 1761 W.C.I.W.. As far as owls verses people, I'm a Christian and I believe God loves people more than owls. However, the problem goes deeper than just owl verses logger, millworker, truck driver, longshoreman, and all others affected.

When I was younger, as a boy growing up in this area, a truck load was often 1 log or 2, never more than 5 logs to the load. Many of these logs were 5 to 8 feet through or more. Now if you see a truck that has 6 to 10 logs that is rare. I have seen trucks with over 30 logs to the load, 8 to 12 inches at the butt. If it is salvage or cleaning up an area for planting, I can see that, but just to cut these trees when they don't have to be cut is a disgrace.

I also believe that companies getting timber from the National Forests and exporting their own trees overseas is double dipping. Last year 6 out of every 10 trees cut in Washington State went to Japan or Asia. *We have to stop the raw log export! We are cutting logs at record rates while we have steadily lost jobs in manufacturing and saw mills.*

We have thousands of jobs that have been lost in Washington and Oregon. We have immediate affects on the employees family, the business community and their families, the schools, and the rest of the community. Everyone suffers while our jobs are shipped overseas.

Stopping the cutting in the National Forest is not the answer. This is just putting more people out of work.

We talk often about the poor owl, but what of the families whose children can't have proper medical attention, proper food, or the things they need for school because their mothers and fathers haven't any job? Their homes are gone. Is this different for these children than for the owls? Don't the children need a home too?

What we need is to start controlling where our logs are going and who is being served.

We need wood for homes and paper and many other essential uses. We cannot keep shipping 6 out of every 10 trees we cut overseas. If they want our finished products, they can buy them.

We are talking about human beings. Where do we put these people who have devoted their whole lives to working in the woods and mills? They are in their 40's, 50's and 60's. Where will they work? McDonalds for $4.95 an hour?

These people also have a right to live in their environment or do just owls have that right?

In my opinion, our government has fumbled the ball on this issue for a long time. We need controls, but just shutting down National Forest Lands is not the answer; hitting communities that are already hard hit. More and more people would lose their livelihood, homes, and way-of-life. When forest lands are locked up many bad things can happen as your over all timber cutting base is reduced forever.

They have had big burns on forest timber lands and not even allowed salvage. How about the old trees that are dying and just going to waste?

In Grays Harbor, in the whole east end of the county, we (Simpson Door) are the only plant that has over 100 people. We have around 400 employed here. If we shut down, the whole east end of Grays Harbor County would be devastated. Are people as important as owls? You be the judge!

James C. Boling is Business Agent for United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America, Local Union No. 2761, McCleary, Washington.

The Human Difference

Dear Editors:

I have just shared my appreciation to Pat Holm for attributing a very positive quote on the arms race to me. Unfortunately, I didn't make the remark as it was written in her article.

She attributed the following remark to me:

"The military-industrial complex is like our Berlin Wall— When we can dance on top of it we will finally be free."

At the SANE/Freeze event where Mike Lowry was speaking, I said, as part of a think-along question, the first part of Pat's quote attributed to me: The military-industrial complex is like our Berlin Wall.

And then I asked Mike if people in Congress (I keep forgetting he's not in Congress) had expressed that idea at all. I'd been very moved by news clips of people from the two Germanies meeting at the wall and celebrating, dancing, and even motorcycling on the wall.

Mike took my comment and ran with it as a touch-off point to discuss the M-I-C, but didn't mention whether anyone he knows had expressed a similar thought. Pat Holm ran with it soon afterwards to organize the Tax Wall event in the park April 15.

So what am I upset about?

I think "we will finally be free" when as many of us as possible (who knows what that percentage might be) take responsibility for our own greed, hostility, projections and other "deadlies". Even if M-I-C were overturned tomorrow, and I wish it would be, we'd still be left with the ugly and comforting fact of our human natures. We'd still be left with the daily kinds of oppression that go on, even in nice offices and universities, but especially in places where oppressed groups have no protection, such as prisons, nursing homes, jails, streets after dark, and also, homes.

Many activists dismiss the idea of human nature: duality, inherent pride, and so forth. Wasn't it the domestication of animals that really caused our present state? The invention of nuclear power? Coal mining? (Maybe it was wood preservatives.)

I don't think solutions to our survival are all exterior. The number of religions around the world, the number of religious books and rituals, the merging of Eastern with Western thought, the "self-help" movement today, indicate that human nature is a dilemma to contend with and that the spiritual quest is a constant. Without recognition of the problem of human nature, working on exterior solutions is only part of the answer.

Working to abolish terrifying problems allows us to taste freedom, but it would take books to ask the question: When are we finally free?

Sincerely,
Melinda Howard
Olympia, Washington

Works in Progress

Editor
Goodman
Editorial Board
Sylvia Smith, Jean Cade, Goodman and Mike Nichols
With Vital Assistance From:
Media Island, Regina Costa, Rob Ritchie, No Sweat, Kris Nordberg, Teresa Jennings

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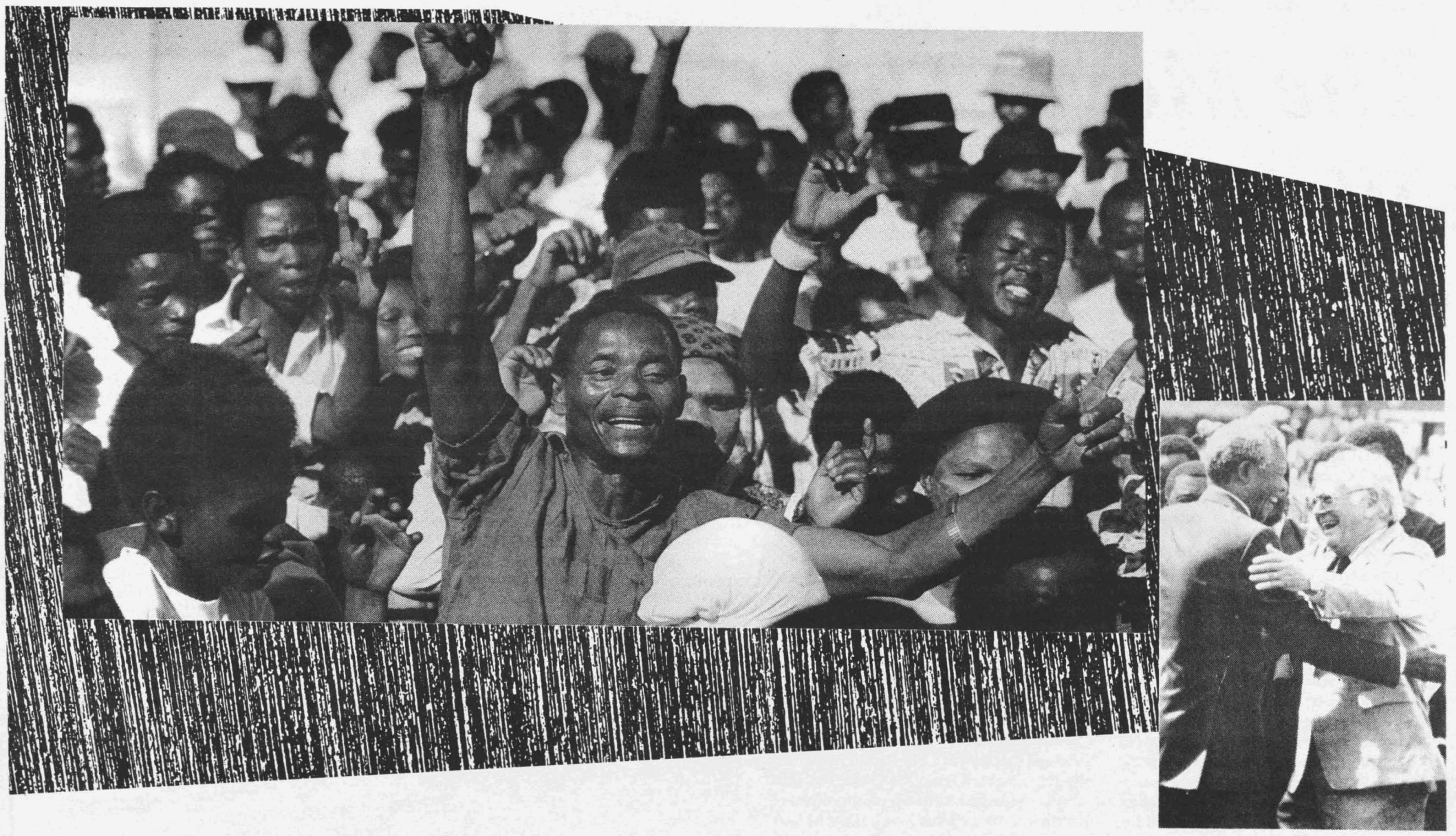

Interview With Fred Dube continued

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Goodman: Another thing they often say is that the only difference between America and South Africa is that in America we wiped out our native population. They often cite giving out blankets infected with smallpox...

Fred Dube: And they don't tell you that they wiped out the same people, they call them the bushmen. They used to shoot them on sight like they would shoot a deer. They don't tell you that they *nearly* wiped out the hottentots, in the same kind of way—they spread smallpox on them and tuberculosis. But they don't say that. They pretend now, now that you can't find a bushman in South Africa, that they never did exist. They try to pretend that the hottentots died from a natural death, which is not true.

Goodman: Black Americans, if they visit South Africa, are classified as honorary whites—

Fred Dube: Yes, Japanese too, at one time. They were honorary whites in the sixties.

Goodman: They're not any more?

Fred Dube: No. That's why one cartoonist used to say "Iron + Japan equals White." Because when they started importing a lot of South African steel and iron ore, from that time Japanese became white.

Goodman: A popular T.V. show when I was there was The A-Team with Mr. T t-shirts being sold in white stores. And I was constantly hearing 'we don't have anything against *American* Blacks. Those guys are civilized. It's *our* Blacks that are savages.'

Fred Dube: Go to the south in America and you hear 'We have nothing against Blacks. We just have something against *these* Blacks here who are loud and criminals.' Same thing.

Goodman: A couple of years ago there were protests nationwide in the U.S. against Apartheid in South Africa. Given that South Africa is a country umpteen thousand miles from the U.S., why do you think that all of a sudden this was something that so many people felt strongly enough about to protest, when there's so much other injustice in the world.

Fred Dube: The United States is a peculiar country. This U.S. is moved by what it can see on televisions. Things that are abstract don't hit them as hard as things they can actually visibly see. I think the pictures that they saw during 1983, '84, '85, and the early part of '86, made many of them understand that Apartheid was not what they often equated it to, mere segregation. It was something that was neo-Nazi. When for instance, I talk about racism, and talk about the South African form of racism, many of the students, I find, didn't know that in actual fact it was fashioned on Nazism. But when they see the pictures, they see the parallels. They act on the basis of what they see. When the pictures were no longer there, even the edge in wanting to be involved began to ebb. So the United States is peculiar in that sense. They act on what they can see. If they can't see it, it doesn't exist.

Goodman: Were you frustrated when South Africa started imposing censorship on the stories and pictures that went out, and the papers for a week put a paragraph at the beginning of each story saying 'this story was censored before it could be sent out of South Africa,' and after about a week they stopped using that notice on T.V. and in newspapers.

Fred Dube: No, I wasn't frustrated. I was surprised that South Africa tolerated it for that long. There is a history of censorship in South Africa. For instance, a newspaper which was printed by the Communist Party of South Africa called *The Guardian* was banned in the fifties. And the banning of newspapers is not something new in South Africa. There is a history of that. So I wasn't surprised. What surprised me was that the American media could have an excuse for not printing the stories, even though they had their representatives in South Africa, claiming that we cannot print these stories because in South Africa it is illegal to do that. When these same journalists go to all risks in, for instance, Afghanistan, in South America, producing stories there. Why not in South Africa, when all that could ever happen to them is to be deported? They won't be killed in South Africa, they will be deported.

Goodman: Lately, a lot of television attention has focused on what the American media calls Black on Black violence. How do you feel about that coverage?

Fred Dube: You find the so-called Black on Black violence is a violence, yes, between Blacks. But it is Blacks who are in different camps. On one side, there is the violence that is coming from Inkata, coming from people who are supporting the regime. On the other side, is the violence coming from people who are supporting the ANC. Who supports the regime? It's not that the regime is only supported by Whites. There are a number of Blacks who are benefiting from—and therefore on the side of—the regime. Gatsha, who they try to say is not a part of the regime, is a leader of the so-called Kwazulu. Who created that? Who pays them? It's the regime. What are it's main stands? He is opposed to what he says is the violence of the ANC in bringing down the state. And yet he's involved in violence against the people who are against the state. He is against economic sanctions against South Africa, which is exactly the position of the regime.

We have not just Black people in the ANC. We have all kinds of people. We have White. We have Colored. We have Indians. So what is this Black on Black violence, when in fact the line is between supporters of the regime and the system, and those who are against the system?

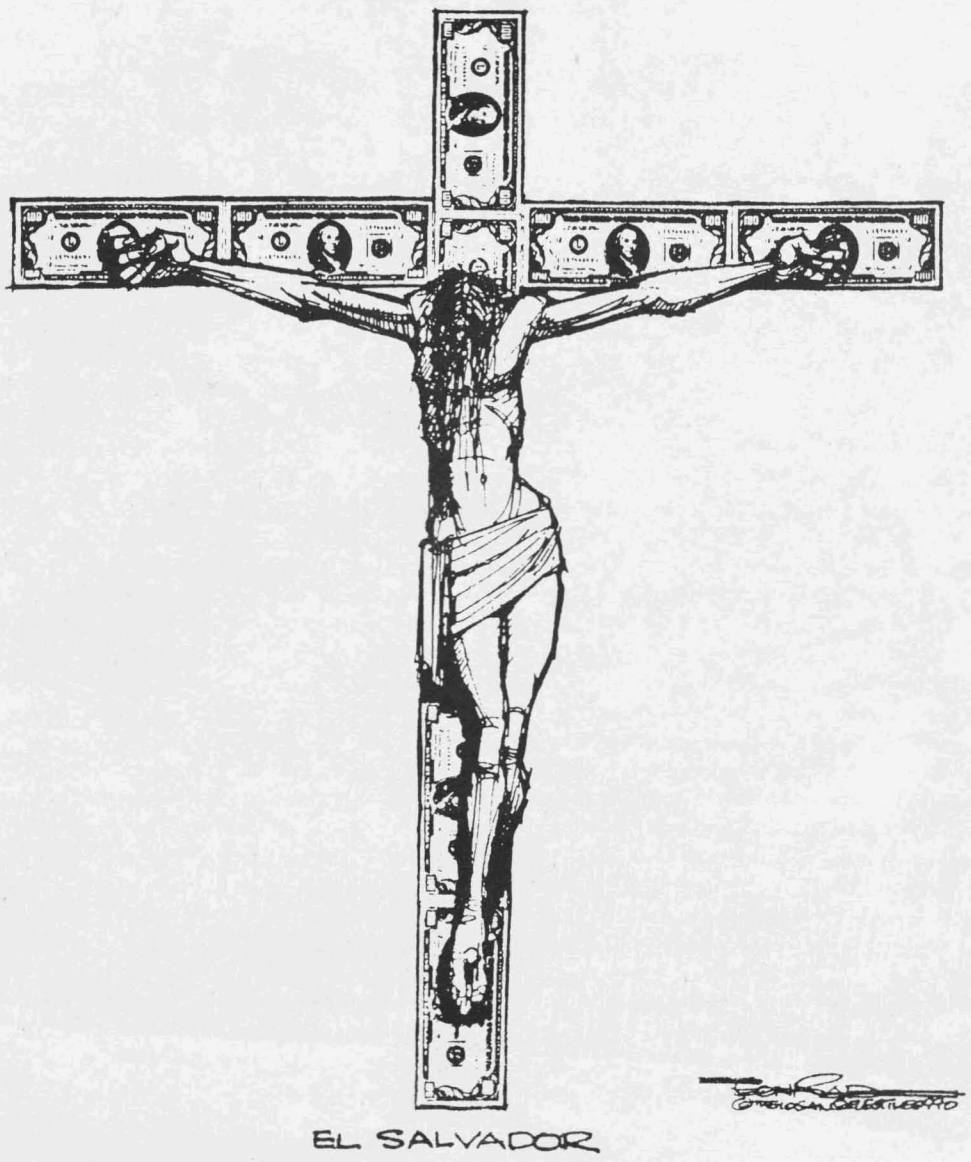
Goodman: What can somebody who lives in Olympia, Washington, who opposes Apartheid, do about it?

Fred Dube: There are plenty of things that people can do here. For instance, investments in South Africa, there should be total divestment. Who is going to be able to help in that? You are not going to find the multinationals who are benefiting from the super exploitation of the Black people doing it on their own. They will do it when the people begin to say we're going to boycott your products. Another thing is to pressure both state and federal representatives of the country to join in with all the people who say that the U.S., will make sure that a South African regime is treated as a pariah as it should be and the President of the United States and the Congress and the Senate will prevent by all means any American investment in South Africa which enables the South African regime to perpetuate its evil system. So you can do that, you can write your Congressman and even the President. And organize others to do the same so that the President knows that there are an overwhelming number of people who are totally opposed to the United States having anything to do with the support of the South African regime.

Goodman is a graduate of The Evergreen State College, where he majored in underground newspapers. Fred Dube is currently a faculty at The Evergreen State College. Kris Nordberg, who pasted this article onto the page, is also a graduate of Evergreen, and would like to get some sleep.

El Salvador-

The Movie They Wouldn't Watch



By Alexander Cockburn and Richard McKerrow

Back in 1986, five members of the non-governmental Salvadoran Human Rights Commission (CDHES) were arrested, tortured and flung into Mariona prison as "enemies of the state." There these brave people conducted a series of clandestine interviews with fellow prisoners and established that of 434 people questioned in Mariona, 432 had been subjected to as many as 40 different types of torture-including incarceration with ants and scorpions and extensive sleep deprivation.

The testimonies taken by CDHES members were smuggled from prison and carried to the United States, where the Marin Interfaith Task Force on Central America prepared a report, "Torture in El Salvador". The report, sent to news outlets around the world, was studiously ignored-thereby earning a Jansen rating as one of the ten most uncovered stories of that year.

Founded in 1978, CDHES continues to document human-rights abuses despite the murder of disappearance of its eight founding members (its former president, Herbert Anaya, was gunned down in front of his children on Oct. 27, 1987) and three bombings of its offices. It has recorded, and more recently videotaped, an extensive record of the atrocities committed by government forces in El Salvador.

During the FMLN offensive last November, when CDHES members were forced into hiding, the commission smuggled their records to the United States before the armed forces could destroy them. In all, 540 pounds of documents, including hundreds of hours of videotape, were rescued.

From these records the Marin Task Force put together a short documentary, "El Salvador Human Rights Violations 1988-1989," and a 20-page booklet, "A Decade of Abuse," spelling out in horrifying detail how U.S. taxpayers' dollars are spent. (Copies of the tape, $19.00, and booklet, $3.50, can be obtained, pre-paid, from 1024 Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, San Ansemo, CA 94960.)

These materials attest once again to the enduring realities: that the Jesuit priests were among thousands as horribly murdered as they; that the killing is done by government forces, not death squads "linked" to that government; and that the violence administered by the agents of the Salvadoran government is systematically grotesque as a matter of policy. In a powerful March 24 essay for the Jesuit magazine America, Daniel Santiago, a Catholic priest working in El Salvador, details the "aesthetics" of this violence:

"People are not just killed by death squads in El Salvador-they are decapitated and then their heads are placed on pikes and used to dot the landscape. Men are not just disemboweled by the Salvadoran treasury police; their severed genitalia are stuffed into their mouths. Salvadoran women are not just raped by the national guard; their wombs are cut from their bodies and used to cover their faces. It is not enough to kill children; they are dragged over barbed wire until the flesh falls from their bones while parents are forced to watch. The aesthetics of terror in El Salvador is religious. The armed forces and the Nationalist Republican Alliance Party (ARENA) uphold the religious ideal of Patria. The individual—and individual rights—are subordinated to the interests of the Fatherland. Arena's political motto echoes that of the death squads; it claims to be the 'Party of National Salvation.' "

The Marin Task Force's video features the victims of subscribers to his Nazi doctrine. Dismembered bodies lying on the roadside, corpse-filled coffins and mourning family members are shown as a voice-over explains the work of the commission. Four individuals then provide personal testimony of their experience, displaying for the camera the wounds, scars, punctures and other marks of torture that have been inflicted upon them.

At the beginning of February the Marin Task force came to Washington, D.C., and showed this tape at a press conference held by Rep. Barbara Boxer (D-CA). They also displayed large blown-up photographs of victims. Senator John Kerry (D-MA) was scheduled to attend the conference, but he backed out at the last minute. Instead, he held another conference with Sens. Edward Kennedy (D-MA) and Barbara Milkulski (D-MD), to introduce a bill calling for the end of military aid to El Salvador. An aide to Kerry claims that the Boxer conference "got screwed up because of the schedule." Another version suggests that the gallant senator avoided Boxer's conference out of solicitude for co-sponsor Alan Cranston (D-CA), who faces a challenge from Boxer in his upcoming re-election bid.

Kerry wasn't the only absentee. According to Suzanne Bristol of the Marin Task Force, no reporters from the New York Times, the Washington Post, NBC or ABC showed up. CBS sent a reporter to the event to collect the materials but withheld a camera crew and failed to report on the conference. The New York Times and the WAshington Post would give no reason for ignoring the press conference. The networks were more cooperative to our inquiries. As someone at ABC told us, it was not "considered one of the top priorities in a very heavy day."

On or around February 6, the Salvadoran armed forces were also preoccupied. According to Radio Venceremos, three women from the repopulated community of Santa Marta were tortured and then killed by troops of Military Detachment No. 2 and the treasury police.

Suzanne Bristol says that the only reports on the event were broadcast by several Mexican television stations and the Fox network. It was no ordinary press conference, Co-director of the marin Task force Bill Hutchinson recalled, "It was interesting to see the reactions of some of the press people. ...Some of them were wiping away tears." Such is the experience of many North Americans unfamiliar with the horrors of daily life in El Salvador.

It is as though the U.S., discovering the Nazi plans for genocidal extermination in World War II, insisted on sending aid to Germany on the ground that a few "good Nazis" deserved support and encouragement...

Today, even the one case the U.S. mainstream press and political community deem worthy of even minimal interest—the murder of the Jesuits—is going nowhere. On May 7, the New York Times conceded, via the ineffable Lindsey Gruson, that four key witnesses—the soldiers guarding the campus—have been transfered out of the country, Col. Benavides' diary has vanished and a military school log noting the name of anyone visiting the university that night has also mysteriously disappeared. On April 10, this same newspaper, beneath the title, "Light in El Salvador," was editorializing about Cristiani's brave pursuit of the killers.

The much-heralded report by Rep. Joe Moakly, which received front-page coverage for its supposedly strong condemnation of the stalled investigation, also spared Cristiani, listing as second of its most important findings the following: "The early stages of the investigation was characterized by good police work. This is an advance from the early 1980's, when similar crimes would not even have been investigated. The task force believes that his was due to strong efforts by President Cristiani." Foley responded at an April 30 press conference to questions about the U.S. Embassy's role: "The embassy made some mistakes in the beginning, but I think it put as much pressure as it could on the Salvadoran government to get to the root of this."

Is there any real likelyhood of an aid cutoff to El Salvador? A bill put forward by Rep. Ron Dellums (D-CA) calling for suspension of all military and most economic aid that had 55 so-sponsors on April 23 stood no chance, nor did a similar bill put up by Rep. Robert Kastenmeier (D-WI) calling for an end to military aid. An amendment proposed by Rep. Gerry Studds (D-MA) calling for an immediate 50 percent cut in military aid to Salvador was attached to the supplemental aid request for Nicaragua and Panama and passed by the House Foreign Affairs Committee on April 26. It contains the stipulation that if President George Bush judges the FMLN to have obstructed U.N. peace efforts, to have launched a large military offensive or to have received outside arms shipments, full aid may immediately be restored.

Such proposals may well be sideswiped by Secretary of State James Baker, who is trying to persuade House and Senate leaders to hold off on Salvador and subscribe to an old friend, a "bipartisan agreement" that would threaten to impose a 25 percent cut later in the year of certain conditions are not met. The lack of progress in the Jesuit case makes it harder for Baker, but if there is any prospect of delay or partial suspension of U.S. aid, it can be guaranteed that some sudden leap forward in the investigation will be loudly trumpeted and excitedly greeted by Sen. Christopher Dodd (D-CT), Foley and the others as "an encouraging sign of real progress."

Rep. Boxer has sent every member of Congress—and also the press—a booklet displaying some of the grim archive assembled by the CDHES. Silence. The killings and disappearances continue, day by day, as the ARENA Party, self-consciously modeled on the Nazis, continues its terror. The supposedly "moderate" Cristiani is irrelevant to this process and incapable of stopping it even if he wanted to. Congress and the administration are supporting, militarily and financially, a regime that has long advertised its strategies of massacre and terror. there is nothing secret about it. It is as though the U.S., discovering the Nazi plans for genocidal extermination in World War II, insisted on sending aid to Germany on the ground that a few "good Nazis" deserved support and encouragement for making demonstrative progress cleaning up the SS and that a cutoff in aid would send "the wrong signal".

One task for us here in the U.S. could be to ensure that every politician and publication in each district is forced to study the CDHES film and booklet and then discuss what the U.S. is supporting and abetting in El Salvador.

Alexander Cockburn is a columnist for the Anderson Valley advertiser, The Nation, and other publications. Richard McKerrow is a British free-lance journalist.

Washington Fails It's Students

by Dennis Bolton

Every child in this country deserves the opportunity to develop to his/her fullest potential.

I believe in Education because I believe that children are our future. Consequently, I must tell you that children in this State are not getting the education they need and deserve. Not, as some would have you believe, by ill prepared, uncaring, self-serving teachers, but rather by a system that hasn't changed in 150 years. And, by some elected representatives who operate on the principal that "what was good enough when they were in school is good enough for students today".

The fact is, everything has changed except the system intended to prepare children for the future.

The fact is, that at a time when children are at greater risk than ever before, we are actually doing less for them.

Lets talk for a moment about the children we are trying to educate. Nineteen percent of the children under age 18 are poor. Along with insufficient funds they suffer from improper diet and a lack of medical care. We probably don't know how many of our students suffer from physical or sexual abuse. We do know there were 43,000 cases of abuse and neglect reported in Washington in 1988. In addition, we are experiencing an epidemic in Drug and Alcohol abuse not to mention the potential entry of scores of "crack babies" into our school system. Gang related crime and violence is certainly on the rise.

I could go on and on, but I ask you, back in the "good old days" were these the kinds of students being educated in the Public Schools of Washington?

What are we doing to meet the demands placed on the system by the increased numbers of at risk kids and what are we doing to provide the quality of education necessary for all children to reach their highest potential? In Washington we spend just over $4300 per student, per year, on education. That's $170 below the national average. If that doesn't seem too bad, consider that a teacher in Lincoln Elementary with 26 students (the state average) would have $4500 more to spend on materials and supplies if we funded education at the national average.

Are we trying to improve this situation? Not when you consider that those per-pupil expenditures have grown in this state, over the past decade, at a slower rate than in any other state in this country.

If you think our national average is OK, consider that only two industrialized countries in the world spend less per pupil than the United States: Australia and Ireland.

And what about class size? In my own District for example, North Thurston High School was originally built for 1200 students. We are currently serving over 1700 students through the use of 24 portables. If teaching in portables isn't bad enough, consider the affect on students and staff attempting to carry on educational activities in a core facility with 500 excess students.

The desire to provide meaningful educational experiences for students in overcrowded classrooms is the source of much of the frustration. For example, the teacher who needs to spend some quality individual time with students in a class of 32, will find each student will receive 7.5 minutes of individual attention, per week, if the teacher does nothing but move from one student to the next without ever teaching a lesson. Also, the teacher who gives a writing assignment to those 32 students and who wishes to give immediate feedback for maximum learning will find a need to go to the time store and buy a couple of hours.

Imagine your-self sitting down to proofread 32 essays. How much time do you think it would take you?

What are we doing about class size problems.? Funds for construction projects already approved in this state are virtually non existent. Our class size average is one of the 4 or 5 worst in the nation.

Is there any relief in sight? By 1992, sixty-five thousand new baby boomers will crowd our already crowded classrooms. By 1994, Washington will be able to fill only 1/3 of its teaching vacancies. We would need to hire 5,800 teachers right now to bring our teacher/student average up to the national average. While the cost to reduce class size in K - 12 by an average of 4 students per class would be $400 million for 1989-1990.

Is there any relief in sight? You tell me.

Lets talk about the people who will be providing education in the future. It is estimated that there will be 3,000 teaching positions open next year. However, after talking with students in our college education programs I can tell you that not only are there too few people majoring in education, many do not plan to teach in this state. Theproblem is the cost of meeting certification requirements compared to salaries in Washington versus comparable costs in other states.

Now, lets look at the issue of salaries. Let me first say, I am not embarrassed to talk about salaries for educational employees. I believe the school employees currently working in our Public School Systems are excellent. They are dedicated to their students almost to a fault. They may also be frustrated because of the roadblocks which prevent them from being more successful with every student.

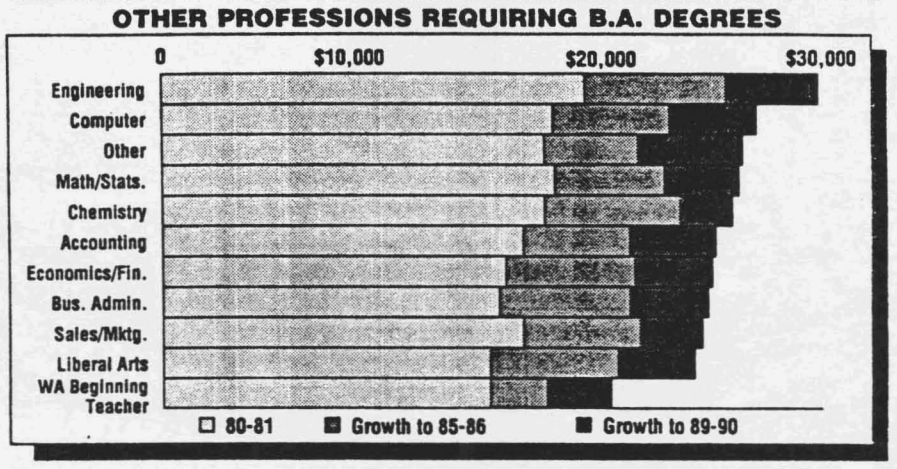
Remember school employees are not just asking for better conditions for themselves. They are asking for better learning conditions for their students. These are one in the same.

Are our legislators trying to improve the situation?

In the 1981-83 biennium, nearly 51% of the state general fund went to public education. In the current biennium, just 46 percent is spent on public schools.

While we're on the subject of statistics, lets look at what kinds of statistics we should use. Legislators have told us our statistics are not valid. However, they are the same statistics used when we bragged about being 4th or 5th in the nation. The reality is that no matter whose statistics we use, educational funding is neither improving nor even maintaining the status quo.

WASHINGTON TEACHER SALARIES CONTINUE TO FALL BEHIND OTHER PROFESSIONS REQUIRING B.A. DEGREES



A comparison of some beginning salaries offered 1988-89 graduates with a B.A. Degree and no experience.

I choose not to argue with any pseudo mathematicians but rather to continue to discuss the trend in education. That trend is down, even by Senator MacDonald's statistics.

The legislature told us a year ago that we could not ask them to fix all educational problems at once. So, we narrowed our scope to include 1) compensation to encourage highly trained educational employees in the future, 2)appropriate class size to allow us to provide a quality education to all the students we teach, and 3) adequate retirement to maintain the quality educational staff we currently enjoy. Now those legislators who told us we were too broad, are saying we are too narrow.

So I ask you, if you were the King of Education in the State of Washington, what would you do if you could change three things right now? What would you do if you were President of WEA to cause those changes to take place?

Let me close with an excerpt I borrowed from a speech given by former US Representative Mike Lowery recently. If as has been reported, the United States is 13th out of 17 industrialized countries in the world in literacy, and, if as has also been reported we are 15th out of 17 in funding education, do you think the Education Governor of the State of Washington, as he has been described by the Education President of the United States, or the Education President himself might be able to figure out, there may be a correlation here.

I say to them, take your time, how many generations can we give up before its' too late.

Dennis Bolton is currently the president of the North Thurston Education Association and a teacher at North Thurston High School in the Special Education Dept..

...only two industrialized countries in the world spend less per pupil than the United States – Australia and Ireland.

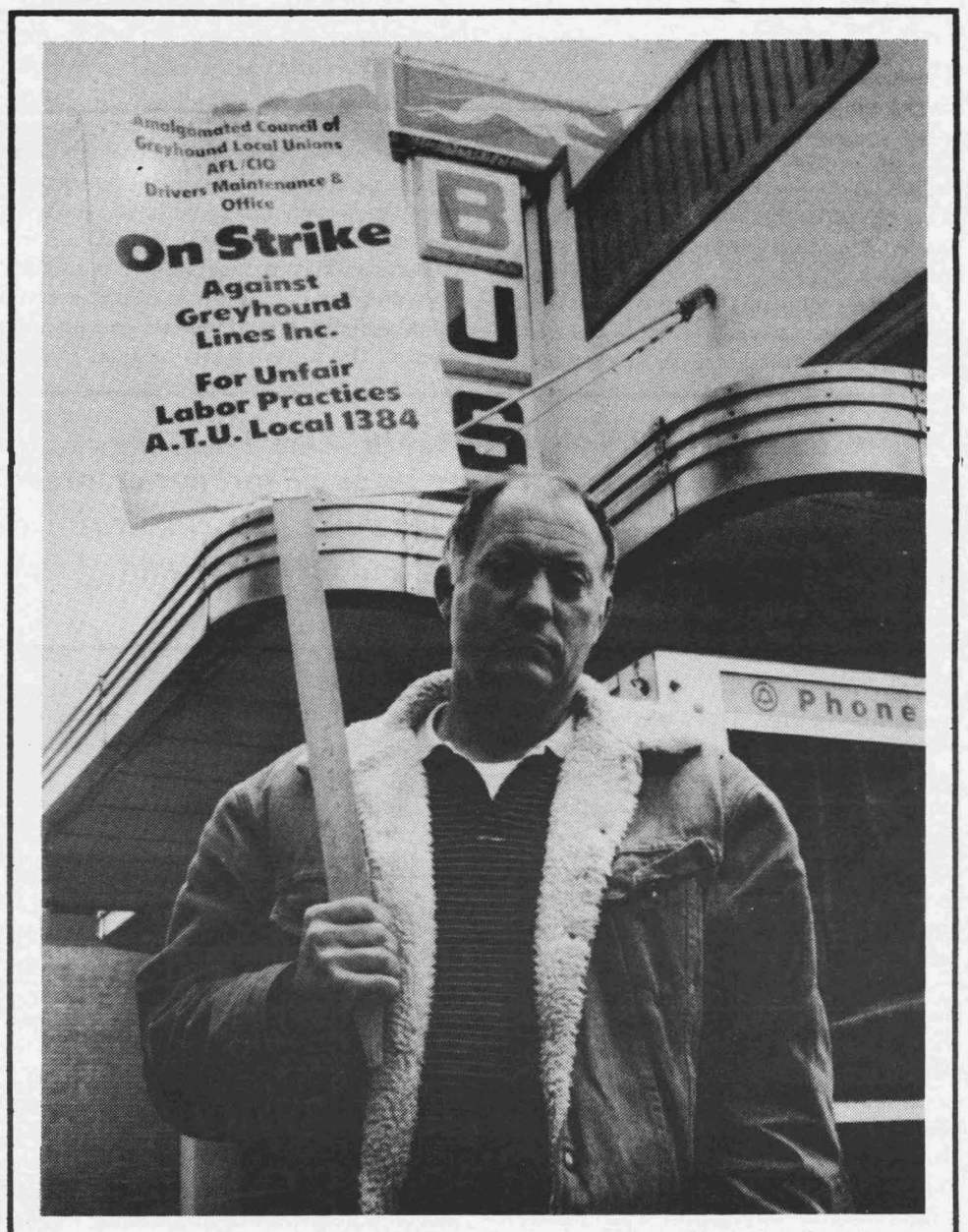


Photo by Goodman

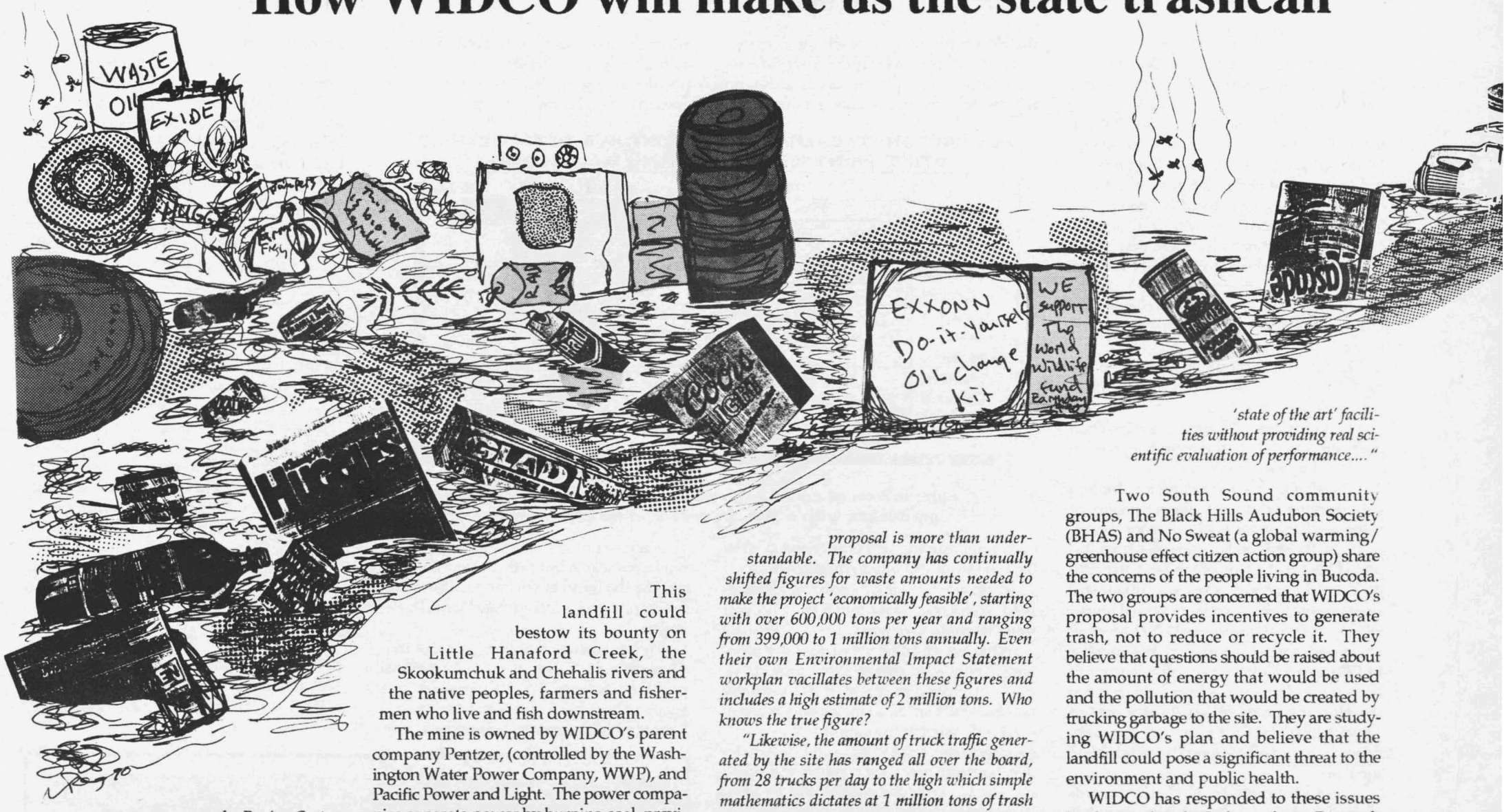
The Greyhound Strike continues. The National Labor Relations Board has formally issued a complaint charging Greyhound with unfair labor practices and will hold a hearing on the issue September 17. Greyhound has fully replaced it's drivers with scab workers, but Greyhound is now virtually broke. Unions representing the striking workers are exploring the possibility of buying Greyhound out.

The Labor Department has confirmed that Secretary of Labor Elizabeth Dole met with Greyhound Chairman Fred Curry last week, and will meet with union leaders this week.

Some of us at the paper don't have cars, and have been hard pressed to avoid Greyhound totally since the strike began March 2. However alternatives do exist, including carpooling with friends and Amtrak (1-800-USA-RAIL). Greyhound is very weak right now, and this is no time to offer them your money.

What a Load of Garbage Dept.

How WIDCO will make us the state trashcan



by Regina Costa

Webster's handy College Dictionary defines insane as "crazy; not legally responsible for one's actions." Any one who has ventured to a "sanitary landfill" knows the meaning of insane.

Sanitary landfills are environmental disaster areas. They reek. Rain water trickling through garbage creates an extremely toxic brew called leachate that can drain into ground water, creeks, rivers and wetlands and contaminate the public water supply. Landfills generate large quantities of methane gas, a gas which contributes significantly to the global warming problem. A 1986 study of non-hazardous landfills in the San Fernando Valley detected 77 distinct gases that escape into the air from landfills.

Sanitary landfills are environmental disaster areas. They reek. Rain water trickling through garbage creates an extremely toxic brew called leachate that can drain into ground water, creeks, rivers and wetlands and contaminate the public water supply.

Residents of the South Sound region dump over 400,000 pounds of garbage into the Hawks Prairie Landfill every day. The American public throws away 550,000 pounds of garbage per minute. Forty percent of household garbage is packaging, the banner of the disposable society.

A company called WIDCO (Washington Irrigation and Development Company) Waste Services has an idea. The plan is to fill a big hole in the ground with over one million tons of garbage per year. The big hole is a coal mine that straddles the line between Thurston and Lewis counties near Bucoda. The people living in this region do not produce enough garbage to make the plan "economically feasible", so WIDCO plans to import the stuff on a massive scale, hauling it in from other Western Washington counties by the truckload. The goal is not to reduce garbage, but to bury it. Out of sight and out of mind, except this mine is blessed with exceptionally good drainage. This would cost WIDCO about $50 million. From WIDCO's perspective, it is a better idea to have counties pay them money to put garbage in this hole.

The proposal is attractive to counties desparately trying to find locations for landfills. A large regional landfill would solve the immediate problem of finding a place to dump trash and would ensure low garbage rates for households and businesses. There is a real need for new landfill sites. The question is whether WIDCO's proposal is the solution.

Citizens in the Bucoda area are concerned about the plan. They are not sanguine about the prospect of thousands of trucks carrying other people's garbage rolling through their community. WIDCO has been holding meetings in towns like Bucoda and Tenino to answer questions and reassure people. However, their responses to questions don't satisfy local citizens.

The Independence Dispatch, a Rochester newspaper, has run several stories and editorials about the WIDCO project. They argue that the company continually shifts its estimates of how much garbage would actually be brought to the mega dump and how it would be transported. A recent editorial reads,

"The frustration of Bucoda residents and others dealing with the WIDCO Waste Services proposal is more than understandable. The company has continually shifted figures for waste amounts needed to make the project 'economically feasible', starting with over 600,000 tons per year and ranging from 399,000 to 1 million tons annually. Even their own Environmental Impact Statement workplan vacillates between these figures and includes a high estimate of 2 million tons. Who knows the true figure?

"Likewise, the amount of truck traffic generated by the site has ranged all over the board, from 28 trucks per day to the high which simple mathematics dictates at 1 million tons of trash and 25 tons per truck. This brings us to 40,000 trucks per year, or over one hundred trucks per day. Again, what are the true figures?"

Moreover, WIDCO now says that the initial intake of garbage will not be placed in the coal pit, but will be used to fill in a shallow area nearby where mining finished in 1978. This will create a garbage mountain rising from between 150-200 feet above the surrounding terrain. This differs from WIDCO's description of the landfill contained in documents provided to public agencies, and the people living there wonder why.

WIDCO may not have thought the people would ask these pertinant questions. The Independence Dispatch quoted a 1984 study by Cerrel Associates of Los Angeles, which may have influenced WIDCO's decision to propose the landfill at the Bucoda site.

"The study states that those least likely to resist siting a waste disposal site are poorer rural communities with populations having high school educations, conservative, older and more 'culturally obedient', with nature-exploiting occupations such as farming or mining. Urban communities with college educated professionals are considered the most likely to resist such siting.

"The Cerrell study goes on to advise certain tactics to get around community resistance, including: use of sanitized language to hide the true nature of their facilities, making promises that are later revised, making donations to local favorite charities, taking officials on tours of state 'of the art' facilities without providing real scientific evaluation of performance...."

Two South Sound community groups, The Black Hills Audubon Society (BHAS) and No Sweat (a global warming/greenhouse effect citizen action group) share the concerns of the people living in Bucoda. The two groups are concerned that WIDCO's proposal provides incentives to generate trash, not to reduce or recycle it. They believe that questions should be raised about the amount of energy that would be used and the pollution that would be created by trucking garbage to the site. They are studying WIDCO's plan and believe that the landfill could pose a significant threat to the environment and public health.

WIDCO has responded to these issues by doing what the Independence Dispatch refers to as "presenting their plan to controlled audiences in choreographed 'coffee hours' in the Bucoda area...." WIDCO has also hired a new public relations consultant — Jim Kneeland, Governor Booth Gardner's former press secretary.

BHAS is asking WIDCO how it plans to manage wastes that may be non-toxic in and of themselves but could be toxic when mixed with other wastes. The company has no experience with solid waste management. This is of concern because WIDCO's EIS workplan indicates that the landfill will accept "special wastes." "Special wastes" include substances which used to be defined as "hazardous wastes" but were reclassified by the Environmental Protection Agency because it was costly for waste companies to comply with the more stringent requirements for handing "hazardous waste." The hazardous nature of the wastes hasn't changed, just the label and the level of care required to handle them.

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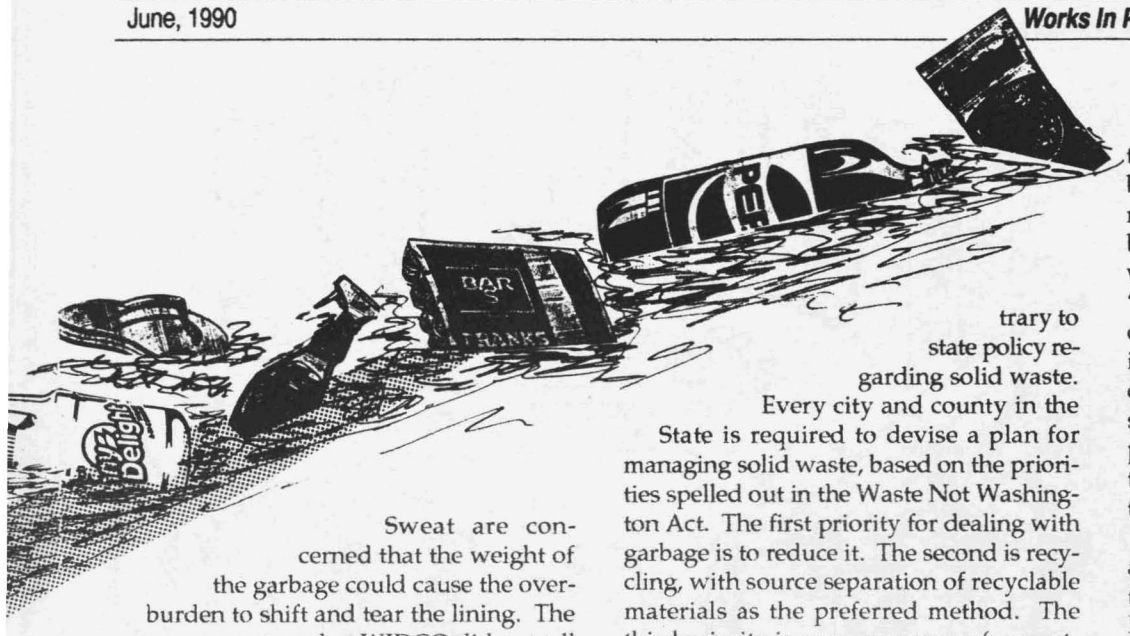
Moreover, possible leachate contamination is a concern for several reasons. According to the Office of Surface Mining (Department of the Interior), WIDCO plans to place garbage on top of overburden, rubble from the mine which accumulated in the course of digging out the coal. Overburden is unstable and can shift. Residents of the area report that slumps at the mine occur fairly frequently. The company plans to line the floor of the landfill with a seal, comprised of four feet of clay and a plastic liner, to prevent leakage. BHAS and No

Something Smells Dept.

June, 1990

Works In Progress



Sweat are concerned that the weight of the garbage could cause the overburden to shift and tear the lining. The groups are angry that WIDCO did not tell the public about their plans to put garbage on top of overburden. The mine is in a region which has several earthquake faults and the Puget Sound Region is due for a large earthquake. This could tear the lining. Moreover, questions are being raised about whether leachates could drain through 100 year old mine shafts dug near the proposed landfill site. BHAS and No Sweat are attempting to contact geologists who are familiar with the proposed landfill site to get information about these questions.

Further questions are being raised about the role of the Port of Olympia in the WIDCO project. The Port has agreed to procure $60 million in tax free, low interest bonds to provide WIDCO start-up funds. The Port would receive a 0.1 percent service fee from WIDCO for procuring the bonds. The attorney acting for the Port, A.W. "Sandy Mackie," is also WIDCO's attorney. According to an article in the Daily Olympian (28 May 1990, p. 1C), Mackie believes there is no conflict of interest because both the Port and WIDCO benefit from the arrangement. Mackie also states that "bond sale poses no additional liability to the port or the county's property taxpayers that the port represents."

BHAS and No Sweat are skeptical. They note that in a bid to collect garbage from Snohomish County, WIDCO stated that financial information on WIDCO's parent company, Pentzar, (a subsidiary of the Washington Power Company) is confidential. BHAS and No Sweat are worried that WIDCO could devise a corporate structure that would allow its parent companies to avoid assuming responsibility for major problems in the future — e.g., leachate contamination occuring after a large earthquake. (Currently, Pacific Power and Light owns 50% of the mine. They have just made a deal with WPS to acquire the other 50%, which will take effect July 31. After this, PPL will sell the landfill site back to WWP. Daily Olympian, 26 May 1990, p.C1)

Vickie Mercer of BHAS wonders why the Port of Olympia and the Thurston County Economic Development Council are not funding local businesses such as diaper services or providers of reusable glass containers for local dairies. She argues that the use of products requiring the packaging that eventually ends up in landfills "are a drag on the local economy. By purchasing these products we send money to wherever the product is produced, and they are not produced locally. Buying disposable diapers hurts local diaper services. Movement of beverages into lightweight aluminum and plastic containers allows industry to centralize production and move its operations out of the local area."

BHAS and No Sweat argue that, in addition to presenting environmental hazards and squeezing local economic development, adopting WIDCO's proposal would be contrary to state policy regarding solid waste. Every city and county in the State is required to devise a plan for managing solid waste, based on the priorities spelled out in the Waste Not Washington Act. The first priority for dealing with garbage is to reduce it. The second is recycling, with source separation of recyclable materials as the preferred method. The third priority is energy recovery (converting solid waste into usable energy and reducing the volume of solid waste), incineration, or landfill of separated waste. The last priority is energy recovery, incineration or landfill of mixed waste. WIDCO is proposing a mixed waste landfill.

Thurston County has a Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC), comprised of representatives from the cities of Olympia, Tumwater, Lacey and Tenino, the Port of Olympia, a representative of the "waste industry" , a representative of Thurston County businesses and three "citizens at large." The Thurston county SWAC began meeting in April. Thurston County must produce a comprehensive solid waste management plan for the county by July 1, 1991. It should be based on the work carried out by SWAC.

WIDCO wants to have the landfill operating by the end of 1991. They are trying to complete a draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) by August 1990. WIDCO must comply with the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Thurston County, is the lead agency under SEPA. WIDCO's EIS workplan states that the County must review and approve all environmental documents prepared as part of the EIS. Moreover, as Lead Agency it will issue the Draft and the Final EIS and will make the final decision for permits.

Thurston County will be asked to sign off on a solid waste proposal that is the least desireable method of solid waste management, under state law. If the County does so, it virtually guarantees that the WIDCO mega-dump will be the driving force influencing solid waste management in this region. This would supercede the County SWAC and make a mockery of citizen participation in the process. Moreover, what is the point of Washington State spending vast amounts of money and resources to research solid waste issues and develop a comprehensive plan of action if local and county governments pay lip service to the law?

Waste reduction is given scant attention by federal, local and state governments. Currently one-half of one percent of all public funds allocated to solid waste management in the U.S. go to waste reduction. There has been no effort to reduce packaging (or to ban non-recyclable packaging), the stuff that comprises forty percent of our landfills.

...in addition to presenting environmental hazards and squeezing local economic development, adopting WIDCO's proposal would be contrary to state policy regarding solid waste.

If the WIDCO landfill is approved, local jurisdictions will have a powerful incentive to ignore waste reduction and recycling because they will have an easy means of moving the garbage out of their backyards.Furthermore, it is not clear whether WIDCO will be allowed to obtain "put or pay" contracts from counties. Under a "put or pay" contract, a county promises a landfill operator that it will ship a certain amount of refuse to the site. If they ship less than they agree to, they still have to pay the landfill operator. Put or pay contracts provide another incentive to counties to ignore waste reduction and recycling.

The issue of mega-landfills in general, and WIDCO's proposal in particular, caters to the "Not in My Backyard" syndrome. Putting the garbage out of sight, in somebody else's backyard, doesn't make it go away. It pushes problems we create onto people who don't have the knowledge or the power to say no. This is true if we are talking about a landfill in Bucoda, or a New York City garbage barge floating around the world looking for a friendly port where it can dump its load.

The editors of the *Independence Dispatch*, BHAS and No Sweat place the WIDCO garbage dump squarely within the context of broader issues — namely, the nature of this society, the need for us to accept responsibility for our actions and the need to recognize this situation as an opportunity to change the way we live. A fact sheet put out by No Sweat says:

"In the Northwest a trend is emerging toward enormous regional dumps that cater to the established throwaway mode. More and more of us, however, are feeling that this throwaway lifestyle is ethically bankrupt and obsolete. "

So what is the alternative? BHAS and No Sweat propose that Thurston County develop a solid waste management plan that complies with state law.

Waste reduction should be the first priority. A key element of waste reduction is education about how we can change our day to day lives to reduce waste. A solid waste management plan could include incentives to encourage people to reduce the level of "garbage." Economic incentives such as low interest loans could encourage people to open businesses that provide services that eliminate waste (e.g., diaper services, reusable glass containers for local dairies), sell products which are non-toxic, recycleable, recycled or which come with minimal or recycleable packaging. Regulatory incentives, such as disposal fees designed to discourage waste, should be recommended.

The second priority is recycling. The Thurston Country solid waste managers should look to Olympia's success at running a recycling program for establishing programs for other areas in Thurston County. County and local governments should purchase recycled products, where available. This would provide an incentive for local distributors to carry these products. These products would then be available for local businesses. This, in turn, would provide an incentive for people to start small businesses which produce products made from recyclable material. The resources of the Thurston County Economic Development Council would be well used to support such endeavors.

Landfills will play a role in solid waste management. But mega-dumps are not the answer. We can work with the state solid waste guidelines to develop landfills to meet the needs of our area. This would save energy and provide incentives to reduce our waste and recycle, rather than provide a convenient excuse to continue avoiding the problems that we are creating with our way of life.

Regina Costa is a member of No Sweat and the Deadhead Rasta Punk Lowriders from Hell.

The company opened the mine on the condition that they would refill the coal pit and contour the topsoil to it's original grade. This would cost WIDCO about $50 million. From WIDCO's perspective, it is a better idea to have counties pay them money to put garbage in this hole.

Green SPEECH

Environmentalists by their very name are people who care about homes. Thurston County individuals and groups concerned about the environment are lucky to have a new home right in Olympia's downtown business district. SPEECH, the South Puget Environmental Education Clearinghouse, keeps its 4th Street doors open to the public Tuesday through Friday, from noon to 6 pm and on Saturday from 11 am to 3 pm.

SPEECH seeks to facilitate the work of local environmental groups by centralizing informnation on local environmental issues and environment-related activities and providing access to substantive resources like meeting space and bulk mail permits. In its two months of operation, SPEECH has collected an impressive range of resources, housed meetings of a number of groups and launched a monthly newsletter.

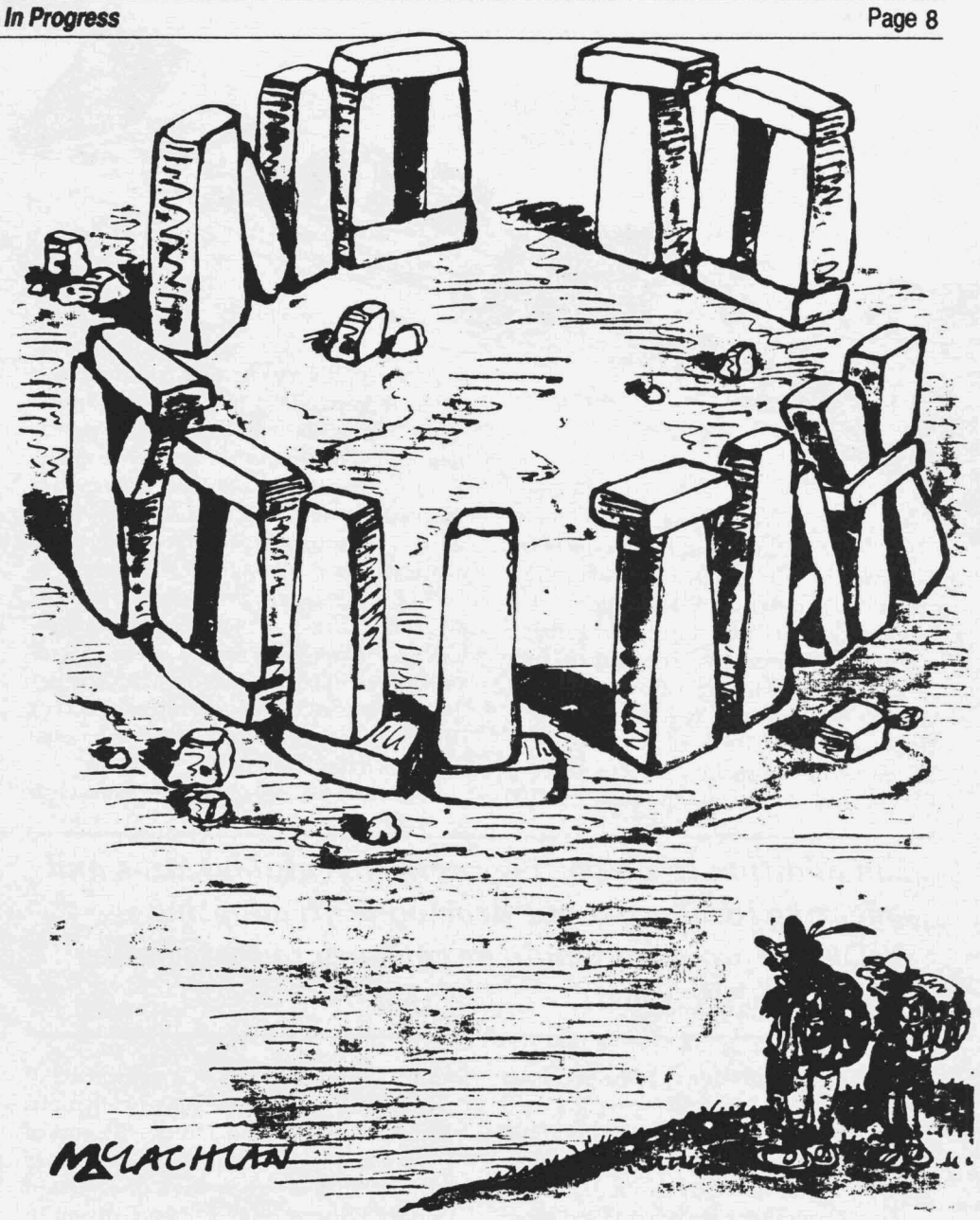
As a volunteer-led organization, SPEECH always is in need of one of our most precious natural resources: energetic, creative volunteers. Volunteer coordinator Ann Butler has a number of suggestions for projects, although SPEECH's most immediate need is staffing the center during its public hours. Volunteers at SPEECH could:

- put together a "Green Pages" directory on Thurston County groups and businesses
- work on identifying environmentally responsible local elected officials and candidates
- analyze environmental legislation and create a "legislative hotline" phone recorder message
- set up a Friday evening schedule of lectures and entertainment for the summer, a Sunday schedule of field trips to threatened local areas, and/or a weekday lunch-time "green bag" dis cussion series
- use artistic talents in producing videos, designing T-shirts and bumper stickers and drawing murals
- design exhibits for schoolchildren's field trips

Newsletter coordinator Rob Richie makes a special plea for volunteers to help put together SPEECH's newsletter by writing articles, covering events, drawing cartoons and graphics and helping during production time. Issues could come out on a bi-monthly schedule if enough people get involved.

SPEECH will have an open house June 15 from 5 to 7pm. All those running SPEECH projects will be available for questions and refreshments will be provided. SPEECH membership is $20 for individuals (more, if possible!) and $25 for organizations. Subscriptions to the newsletter are $10. SPEECH is located at 218 W. 4th St. Its phone number is 786-6349.

Poll Tax: A Black Plague Strikes Britain



by Meta Heller

The mystery of the century is why Great Britain has shifted from a property tax to a poll tax, euphemistically called a "community service charge" by the Thatcher government. Granted, the British property tax was far from perfect, but it had served to fund community services for 389 years—since the reign of Queen Elizabeth I.

A year ago Thatcher's conservative party imposed a heavy poll tax on Scottish residents, substituting it for property taxes. This year they imposed the same on all the British Isles except Ireland.

More than half a million Scots (out of 5 million) are refusing to pay. On the bills issued March of '89, about 80% have paid something but are not up-to-date. Authorities are beginning to take court action against delinquents"arresting" bank accounts or wages, confiscating goods to sell at summary warrant, etc.

In March'90, when the government announced the imposition of the community charge for residents of England and Wales, hundreds of protesters besieged city halls, threw egg-and-flour bombs at police, broke store windows, looted, etc. Citizens are still in an uproar.

The current riots over a poll tax remind Britishers of the poll tax uprising of 1382. At that time it was "off-with-your-head" for protesters.

By Britain's example, one can readily appreciate the importance of the property tax. Unbelievable as it seems, Great Britain is joining the Third World.

England are already the highest in Britain. Taking the Tax off property can only make them rise. Rents paid by tenants will also rise. The increase in rents will go entirely into the pockets of the landowners." Furthermore, though the tenants will pay more, their housing will be of a continual deteriorating quality.

A U. S. political science professor, Daniel Hellinger, on sabbatical in England recently shared some insights in *In These Times*, a newspaper by the Institute for Public Affairs, Chicago. (April 11-17 edition.)

Hellinger explains: "According to Tory reasoning, only 14 million voters were paying for local government services (under the property tax), while 50 million others paid nothing (because they were not landowners)." The Tories wanted the Labour-controlled Councils, about 100 in all, to be forced to control spending. "To Accomplish this, the government decided to turn to a flat-rate head tax and to take away the local authorities' power to tax businesses, the preferred choice of many Labour-governed townships."

As in our country, the property tax in Britain has been used for hundreds of years by local government to bridge the gap between central government funding for local government and local spending.

Real property in Britain was on a "reassessment cycle", similar to our's (which varies from state to state). Hellinger explains that "because local property taxes were slated to rise first under reassessment in Scotland in 1989, the poll tax legislation

Hundreds of protesters besieged city halls, threw egg-and-flour bombs at police, broke store windows, looted, etc. Citizens are still in an uproar.

A tax on real property is the time-honored way of funding services for local governments—police/fire protection, streets, water, sewers, garbage removal, etc. Theory reasons that everyone needs these services, that private property benefits most, that the richest people own the majority of the property, thus they should bear the brunt of the costs of public services.

Some countries, including our own, have been moving away from the property tax since the '30s. Increasingly, they have adopted instead user fees, sales taxes, and excises on gasoline, tobacco, alcohol, real estate transfers, parking, etc—shifting the burden in significant ways.

A few countries have moved in the opposite direction, that is, to improve the property tax so that more, not less, community services are funded by it. These countries tax the ever-increasing land values (because of an ever-increasing population and thus demand for land) at a high rate and buildings at a low rate, or not at all. The theory behind this switch from the general property tax is that land values are really community-created by all the past and present public investments in facilities to serve societal needs.

Countries which have improved their property tax, allowing them to charge less (or nothing) for user fees, are Denmark, Holland, Taiwan, New Zealand, Australia, the Union of South Africa, provinces in western Canada, and in the U.S, the State of Pennsylvania.

Working people know when they are being gouged. American economist Steven B. Cord says, "Land prices in southern

ramrodded through Parliament in 1988 provided that the new system would be implemented one year earlier there." One year later, the new poll tax was to be implemented in England and Wales. Ironically, this year the first payments were due—on April Fool's Day.

One of Margaret Thatcher's close advisors said, "She has fallen into the very trap she promised she never would. She has come under the influence of the layabouts and the land-owners of the party."

Resistance to the new tax naturally fol-

The Poll tax is fair only in the sense that the Black Death was fair. It is indiscriminate, striking at young and old, rich and poor, employed and unemployed.

lowed—first in Scotland, then in England and Wales.

A number of anti-tax organizations formed. Most prominent are the All Britain Anti-Poll-Tax Federation (ABATE) and one called the Tory Reform Group. In their literature, the Tory reform Group grimly compares the poll tax to the plague. "It has all the markings of a disaster. The Poll tax is fair only in the sense that the Black Death was fair. It is indiscriminate, striking at young and old, rich and poor, employed and unemployed."

The new tax imposes a fee for local services on all adults between 18 and 65 years old. Even the most indigent are expected to pay a minimum, 20%, of their base charge. The larger the family, the higher the levy. Camden council of Greater London has the highest service fee of all the country's councils — 534£ per person. Among those hardest hit are middle-class pensioners whose life savings disqualify them from tax relief.

Throughout, the Tory government has been sneaky. Hellinger says: "For political reasons, the Treasury calculated the sum the government would provide on an unrealistically low inflation estimate, resulting in a 3 billion£ lapse between the government's original projections and what local authorities would actually have to raise to maintain local services. (The Ministry of Environment, responsible for local government affairs has refused to divulge the method of calculation.) As a result, even staunchly Conservative communities have found themselves needing to raise an average of 31% more than what the government originally estimated. Because the new (poll tax) rates are tied to spending (as were the property tax rates), the poorest communities—ones that have suffered the most under Thatcher's laissez-faire policies—will have to pay the highest prices."

He cites, for example, townships in Greater London. In London's affluent Westminster District, the average household bill is estimated at 266£, while the average bills in working-class Camden and Hackney townships are estimated at 843£ and 876£ respectively.

Hellinger points out that the poll tax is also a bitter pill for many skilled working- and lower-class voters who shifted their allegiance from Labour to the Tories because they were offered mortgages to purchase public council housing that Thatcher had sold to the private sector.

He says: "Unlike in the U.S., the mortgages vary with inflation and prevailing interest rates, which have risen to 15%—well above the current 7% inflation rate. And so the mortgage payments of this new class of homeowners, cultivated to provide a basis for a stable Tory majority in the future, have risen drastically. The combined effect of the new tax, rising housing costs, and increased unemployment and inflation are driving voters back into Labour's arms."

Should Labour gain power, Hellinger speculates, Labour leader Kinnock would have to develop a method of funding for local government that is both fair and adequate. So far, Kinnock has not indicated what he would recommend.

What would you do?

Meta Heller is an Olympia free-lance writer who specializes in taxes. If you wish to subscribe to her newsletter, issued twice a month with stories on taxes, send $25 to Washington State Tax Facts, 7715-C Dr. SW, Olympia, WA 98502.

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In

Works in Progress

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How GM won the War (against the American Dream)

by Thomas Mitchell Freeman

Roger & Me, an independent film by Michael Moore, chronicles the death of the American Dream. It is the story of what happened to the city of Flint, Michigan when General Motors (GM) decided to close its plant there. Flint is the birthplace of GM, currently the largest industrial corporation in the United States, with assets in excess of 87.4 billion dollars.

The Roger of *Roger & Me* is GM chairman and chief executive officer Roger B. Smith who closed the plants in Flint, Michigan and opened the same number in Mexico, where workers are paid only 70 cents an hour. This occurred at a time when GM earned record profits. Smith's decision to abandon the auto workers in Flint resulted in the loss of 30,000 white and blue collar jobs, forced union concessions on wage scales and benefits, and led to the import of Japanese cars with Chevrolet nameplates.

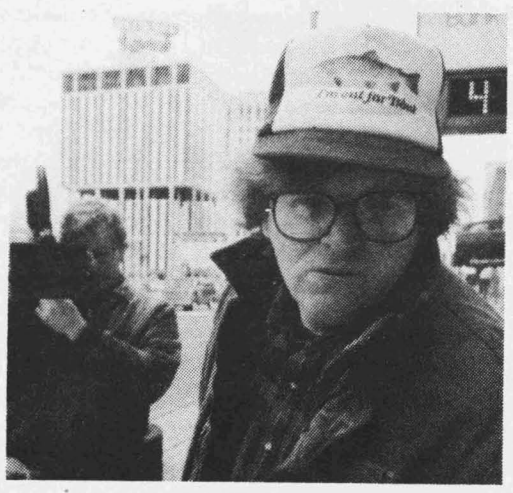
Roger & Me centers on the aftermath of the plant closings - high unemployment, families evicted from their homes, desperate yet failed attempts to revive the local economy, mass exodus of residents to other parts of the country, massive crime increases, deteriorating abandoned buildings, and a burgeoning rat population that surpasses the remaining humans.

Filmmaker Michael Moore grew up in a blue-collar neighborhood of auto-workers. His father assembled spark plugs in a GM plant; his uncle participated in the successful 1937 sit-down strike in Flint which gave birth to the United Auto Workers (UAW). *(The UAW sitdown victory against GM is told in an hour long video entitled: With Babies and Banners. It depicts how women formed a human blockade, that prevented the police from storming the plant and busting the strike. The video is available for viewing through The Evergreen State College Labor Center.)*

After the 1937 victory, prosperity reigned in Flint. The workers achieved the American Dream: a home, a car, and a sustainable income to support their families. The city grew to love GM and honored the corporation with celebrations and parades. They were part of the GM family, and workers thought that, like any loving parent, GM would never turn its back on its children. Roger Smith's decision to pull out of Flint proved them wrong.

Throughout the film, we witness the effects of the plant closures on the community. People are forced to undergo extraordinary measures in order to survive. Examples include working at demeaning fast food jobs, the daily selling of blood plasma and one of the saddest stories of all - a poor woman living on social security forced to sell rabbits as pets or meat to provide food for her family.

Michael Moore's film is funny, while painfully sad. His self-deprecating humor shown throughout his attempts to meet with Roger Smith adds some entertaining aspects to an otherwise utterly devastating story. (He believes that if Smith comes to Flint, Michigan and sees what has happened, that he will do something to help the suffering there, this is indicative of the familial ideology Flint residents held toward the GM corporation.) It is heart-wrenching to witness the Flint deputy as he evicts people



Above: filmmaker Michael Moore

from their homes. Adding to the misery is the county jail where many former auto-workers end up after turning to crime in desperation. The testimonial of the auto-worker turned jail guard is also moving as he describes seeing former co-workers in jail.

Perhaps the most brilliant moment of the film occurs when Michael Moore tries to talk with the ever illusive Roger Smith at the annual GM Christmas Party in New York City. After over a year of phone calls, telegrams, letters, attempts to get the executive offices of GM's Detroit building, not to mention following him all over the country, he still has not been able to talk with Smith. How he gets into the Christmas Party is beyond me, but Moore is able to film Smith's annual message of love and compassion juxtaposed with a family in Flint being evicted on Christmas Eve. The all-white, cute, and young choir singing "You better watch out! You better not cry!", at the same time that a family is being literally put out of their home is startling.

Roger Smith quotes Charles Dickens, a champion of the poor, during his Christmas address, which is the utmost example of hypocrisy and absolute disregard for the people who enabled him to become the powerful man he is - the loyal workers of GM.

Adding a sickeningly simplistic positive and unreal message in the face of tough times are Pat Boone, Anita Bryant, Miss America 1988, Bob Eubanks - (the racist, sexist host of the Newlywed Game) - and Reverend Robert Schuller. None of these people appear capable of seeing what GM has done to the people of Flint, Michigan. None of them have the brain capacity to understand the obvious, - that a thriving company closes operations in the United States and opens shop in Mexico where the opportunities to exploit workers are endless. None of these people acknowledge that the American Dream has been stolen away from the working class in Flint and that the Robin Hood in this story steals from the poor to expand the coffers of the rich.

Roger & Me is a testimonial about human suffering and love of community. It is one man's attempt to tell the rest of the country about the destruction of this hometown. It is an indictment of the greed which blinds corporations to the ramifications of their decisions. It is a social commentary which poses the question of how much obligation does a corporation owe a community which enabled it to obtain its fortune and spread its fame. Furthermore, *Roger & Me* clearly demonstrates the weakened condition of American Labor unions and how their power base has eroded. *(For a clear analysis of the decline of American Labor, see Dan Leahy's* ***The Deal is Dead*** *available through TESC's Labor Center).*

Perhaps the most touching and emotionally difficult scene for me was seeing the building in which the 1937 sit-down strike had occurred, being torn down after GM abandoned Flint. The plant was a monument of victory against GM's abuse in 1937 and it's destruction in 1988 is a symbolic message from the corporation to the workers. That message is - you the workers may have won one battle, but GM won the war.

Don't miss Roger & Me. It is truly one of the best independent documentary films to ever have been made. It is an absolute must see for anybody concerned with social justice and progressive change. It is for anyone with a heart.

Thomas Freeman is an Evergreen graduate, where he studied labor history and culture through The Evergreen State College Labor Center's New School for Union Organizers. He is also the host of KAOS Olympia's Afternoon Delight Show, broadcasting each Thursday from 12 Noon to 4 p.m. at 89.3 F.M. ***Roger & Me*** *is rumored to be coming to the State Tri Theatre in downtown Olympia (all seats $1.50) and will be released on videotape at the end of the month.*

Workplace Injustice Still Thrives

by Jesse Jackson

Traveling through Greensboro, N.C. recently on the first leg of a 10-city tour designed to organize non-union textile workers, family farmers and factory workers, I was suddenly hit by how much the Old South had changed—and how much it has not.

Much of the racial hostility and violence that I witnessed while growing up in the South have long since ceased. In 30 years, the issues have also changed, from demonstrating for a seat on a bus, to fighting for better wages and health care benefits. To some degree, there has always been a connection between civil rights and workers' rights. Just before Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. died from an assassin's bullet in 1968, he was fighting an economic justice campaign for garbage workers in Memphis.

Over the years, I've addressed rallies attended by thousands of mine workers, sharecroppers and other workers, black and white, who were fighting their bosses for that same economic justice in the workplace. I've seen inadequate investment in education for children who live in the South. I traveled recently through Baton Rouge, La., and visited "Cancer Alley," an area littered with toxic waste dumps located in the poorest disfranchised areas. Not too long ago, I read an alarming report that said 15 million people who live in the South have no health insurance.

When people cannot work their way out of poverty, their spirits are broken. The family unit breaks down and disintegrates. Oftentimes, mothers are abandoned and are left at risk to care for their children—who are at risk because their fathers are now at large.

Cheuveletta Jones, who works at a chicken-processing plant in Ahoskie, N.C., brought into focus recently the realities of the working poor in 1990. Trembling and crying, this divorced mother with one child, told me how desperately she needs her job. But then she showed me her crippled hands and wrists, and I could see the pain in her eyes that told me she could not work.

Jones said her $5.90-an-hour job as a wing-grader involved checking 60 chickens a minute for bruises and broken parts to determine their grade. To increase production, the supervisors sometimes speed up the conveyor belts to spew out upwards of 100 chickens per minute.

The noise inside the processing plant is so deafening that many complain of hearing loss. Jones has lost 35 percent of her hearing in her right ear.

After working under these conditions for several months, many of the women contract carpal tunnel syndrome, an inflammation and swelling near the median nerve between the wrist and the hand. When these workers can no longer function under these horrid conditions, Jones told me, they are ostracized, then fired and called "lazy."

Because they are not unionized, these women have no avenues to air their grievances. Ashamed, dejected, crippled and disabled and with no health insurance, they end up on welfare. About 50 percent of the women at the plant continue to work despite their pain because they have few alternatives. They are mostly young, single mothers.

These women, and the thousands of others like them, are the moral challenge and obligation of our day. And no, they are not all black, uneducated workers. But regardless of these workers' color, when the bosses pull the plug on these factories, turn out the lights and move their non-union shops elsewhere seeking even cheaper labor, all workers suffer in the end. They all look amazingly similar in the dark.

When these workers, the backbone of our society, feel that their labor does not count, they feel that their votes will not count. Across the South today, there are millions of unregistered voters who feel like Cheuveletta Jones. We must focus on renewing the faith and reviving the spirits of one of our most undervalued resources—the working poor.

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Welcome...

by Dan McGrady

Welcome to Works in Progress. It is my wish that this newspaper can serve as a link between the Rainbow Coaltion and groups such as the SANE/FREEZE, and F.O.R. which are working towards economic and social justice as well as individual activists who want to know what is going on in our community. I also invite past and present Rainbow members and members of the larger community to become involved with our organization.

This summer we will be working on several important campaigns and registering voters for the fall election. We are also working with the Thurston Community Coalition to draft an alternative state budget and the other activities they will be committed to. One of our Co–chairs, Ginger Thomas, is organizing a food program for local Indian Tribes and she is looking for people who would like to dedicate their time and energies to helping people in need.

If those activities aren't enough, we need people to come and help us define our goals and agenda. Do you care about the huge bail–out to the Savings and Loan industry, the "Drug War's" erosion of Civil Liberties, the lack of interest in substantially cutting the defense budget, the continual degradation or our environment, the attack on reproductive rights, the lack of health care for a large part of our population, the recent attempts to break unions and erode the rights of workers everywhere or a myriad of other injustices that are allowed to happen or are perpetrated by those in power? Not enough Democrats and fewer Republicans are doing enough to solve these problems. We need to solve them ourselves. Together, we have the power to fix the problems those in power are ignoring and to establish intelligent and just policies that will meet the basic needs of everyone.

If you are interested please contact Todd Snider at 352–1877.

Patchworks-
Neo-Nazis, Republicans & Gaybashing

by Thomas Mitchell Freeman

When a member of the editorial board of the new Rainbow Coalition Newspaper *Works In Progress* invited me to write a monthly column, I readily accepted the offer. After all, the "Rainbow Coalition of the Rejected" exemplifies my vision and hope for political activism and effective social change in this country.

Having settled on writing a column, I struggled with a title- one that was catchy, yet simple- contextual, yet different. Finally, I settled for Patch Works. Patch Works came to mind when I thought back to Jesse Jackson's excellent speech to the 1988 Democratic Convention in which he used the analogy of various consituencies: the Unemployed , Blacks, Asian-Americans, Native Americans, Chicano/Latino people, Differently abled, Gays and Lesbians, Women, Veterans, Farmers, Union and Peace Activists, etc., as individual "patches" which, when alone, equal small pieces of fabric, but when brought together, create a magnificient progressive quilt capable of realigning our society and governmental structures.

Patch Works does not neccessarily reflect the views of the county, state, or national Rainbow Coalition. However, it is my hope that the positions articulated in this column will be consistent with the goals of political realignment that the Rainbow is working towards.

On a Saturday evening in mid-May, a group of hate-filled bigots from The Aryan Nation compound in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho were apprehended by FBI agents as they were enroute to plant pipe bombs at the Neighbours Disco, (a Gay bar in Seattle), along with bombs directed at a Tacoma Black nightclub, a Seattle synagogue, and Korean businesses near South Tacoma Way.

The three men arrested admitted that they intended to create mayhem and a large body count in order to revitalize "White America." Since I used to live in Capital Hill, I was shocked to realize that terrorism could easily happen here - to any of us.

A friend of mine was at Neighbours the night it was to be bombed . He's a student at Evergreen and is currently working on a film about Gay life, one that originally was supposed to be a celebratory exploration of the coming out process. The realization that people could want him dead and would even carry out an assassination attempt has tempered his original vision. Adding to his pain is the fact that one young man, who was interviewed, attempted suicide the same night of the planned terrorist bombings, no doubt due to the stresses of the lack of acceptance within a hostile society. Talking to my friend, I could see the joy gone, replaced with depression, sadness, and fear. It occurred to me, and him, that any of us at any time could be a target of hate crimes from a variety of sources.

Recently the Thurston County Republican Party held their local convention which stressed unity and the goal of electing Republicans. But under the banner of working together is an ominous platform which fits hand-in-hand with the goals of the Aryan terrorists in Idaho. Among the expected useless dribble about a flag amendment, spending cuts, and opposition to a state income tax were three items which would make any neo-Nazi proud.

The Republican platform supports the Jesse Helms diatribe against funding for the National Endowment for the Arts for materials that "violate standards of public decency." That means art which depicts homosexuality, although they won't come right out and admit it. The platform states absolute opposition to the use of public funds for abortion and organizations that "promote" abortions. Finally and equally appalling, the platform decries any attempt to implement "special rights or minority status to anyone based on his or her sexual orientation."

Apparently, these vanguards of public morality want us to know that protecting Gays and Lesbians from discrimintation in employment, housing and public accomodations amounts to "special rights," not that it addresses a problem of consistent discriminatory practices. It seems clear to me that the recent attempted murder of Gays and Lesbians in Seattle and other cultural constituencies from Seattle to Tacoma, indicates why protection against discrimination is needed , and the fact that the anti-Gay plank comes on the heels of the Seattle incident exposes the Republicans as a party of mean -spirited bigotry and insensitivity. While the Republicans did not carry pipe bombs in their hands, nor plan any known physical attacks on the Gay community, their rhetoric falls in line with the neo-Nazi agenda and inflames hatred in those who already find Gay and Lesbian culture distasteful.

Compare the Republican homophobia with the Rainbow Coalition's treatment of Gays and Lesbians. Jesse Jackson has consistently advocated the addition of prohibitions against discrimination based on sexual orientation to the already existing categories of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the extension of that ban to the military and various national security agencies. Jackson and the Rainbow also argue for the removal of Gay and Lesbian exclusion to the provisions of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, increased federal spending for AIDS research and patient treatment, and a federal executive liaison for the Lesbian and Gay Community.

The Rainbow Coalition calls for passage of an Equal Rights Amendment, supports equal pay for work of comparable worth, supports organized labor and an end to union busting, and freedom of choice in reproductive issues including medicare funding of abortion services for the poor. Ironically, the Republican party which considers itself the vanguard of morality presents the most inhumane and immoral platform in existance. It feeds the hunger of those who want to discriminate, of those who want to hate, and of those who want to attack and kill. It is the verbal equivalency of pipe bombs, machine guns and clenched fists.

Fortunately for us all, there is an alternative. The "Rainbow Coalition of the Rejected" will continue to welcome those traditionally disenfranchised from political participation and power. The progressive quilt will eventually cover this continent with a new political alignment of social and economic democracy and justice. Justice that will extend into Central Americal, South Africa, and The Palestinian homeland.

Oh yes, back to my friend. He's still working on his film. His hope has been bruised, but not destroyed . The young man who had attempted suicide is recovering and is working with a support group to come out to his family. He too is finding hope.

For the rest of us, the lessons are clear. We cannot remain silent in the face of blatant bigotry, hatred and violence, regardless of the source. The neo-Nazis and the Aryan compound are counting on our complicity, as is the Republican Party. The seeds of hatred must be confronted no matter where- no matter by whom. Anything less victimizes us all.

Tom Freeman is a regular columnist for ***Works in Progress*** *and can regularly be seen on FM radio.*

Announcements

Volunteers are needed for the *Works in Progress* editorial board. If you want to read all the material before the paper comes out, and have a say in the paper, call Sylvia at 459-3625.

The next general meeting of *The Thurston County Rainbow Coalition* is Saturday, June 16, at the First Christian Churxh. Call 352-1877 for info.

An Open Letter to the State Treasurer

Washington Increases Investment in Exxon

Dear Mr. Dan Grimm:

We are addressing you as a responsible member of the State Investment Board, for information and assistance.

We were very much disturbed upon learning that the Board invested even more heavily in the Exxon Corporation in 1990 than they had heretofore. Our state is now investing 7.7 million dollars in the Exxon Corporation which is facing a five count federal criminal indictment which may well result in up to $700 million in fines and other criminal penalties. In addition, Exxon faces more than 160 civil lawsuits by the state of Alaska and other groups. Exxon has further shown its disdain for its social responsibility for the devastation in Alaska, including the serious disruption of Alaska's society as well as its economy, by stating that the spill has now been completely cleaned up, and has not provided additional money to assess the damage from the Exxon Valdes spill as required by federal officials. In addition, very recently, Exxon's shareholders overwhelmingly rejected all six resolutions which would have pledged the company to reduce emissions and follow the so-called Valdez Principles for corporate environmental conduct. (At their April, 1990 annual meeting in Houston.) We can see where the shareholders' interests are coming from. The American public, on the other hand, is very much disenchanted with the Exxon Corporation, and we feel certain that large numbers of Americans will not be filling their automobile and truck tanks at Exxon service stations for a long time.

Why did the Investment Board more than double its investment in Exxon this year? WE protest the action. We do not understand the Board's rationale in using the state's compensation and pension funds in this manner. We would appreciate having an explanation.

On another subject, related to the above, we would like to see our investment board seriously explore investment in socially responsible corporations. We are seeing numerous articles by economists and investors on the growing profitability of corporations which are responding to the long-neglected needs in our society. One area which is interesting includes businesses which make air and water filtration equipment for smokestack and drainage systems and other kinds of pollution control and environmental management. These stocks are favored because spending by corporations and government on environmental control is definitely increasing. In addition to the emission controls needed on corporations in the U.S., eastern as well as western European factories are using old factories with high pollutant emissions. Also, there is more legislation requiring companies to respond to the laws restricting emissions. For some corporations in this area, profits have been going up 25 to 28 per cent in each of the last few years. These are some of the important investments for the '90s.

Thank you for listening. We eagerly await your response.

Very Sincerely,

Evelyn Montague

Evelyn Montague,
Thurston County Rainbow Coalition

Creating a More Democratic Democracy

by Rob Ritchie

Proportional representation (PR) describes several electoral systems that facilitate fair and just representation of minority populations and viewpoints. In the U.S.'s current winner-take-all/single district method, women, blacks, SANE/Freeze supporters, union members and environmentalists are not represented in Congress anywhere close to their percentage of the general population. However, in most other democracies —including all but two countries in Europe — forms of PR are used, and such "special interest" groups have significantly greater voices in government.

WHAT IS WRONG WITH U.S. POLITICS AS IT IS?

A recent New York Times series entitled "The Trouble with Politics: Running vs. Governing" began, "As America's democratic visions and values seem to triumph around the world, an unhappy consensus has emerged at home that domestic politics has become so shallow, mean and even meaningless that it is failing to produce the ideas and leadership needed to guide the United States in a rapidly changing world." It is difficult to dispute this contention. Critical problems go unaddressed while candidates talk about "toughness" and "points of light." In the 1988 presidential election, George Bush was elected with pro-Bush votes from less than 20% of the population: 50% of the eligible electorate did not vote, 23% voted for Michael Dukakis and as many as 12% voted against Dukakis rather than for Bush. In the same year, 99% of incumbent members of the House of Representatives were re-elected, most having faced no opposition in party primaries and several no opposition in the general election.

> The U.S. media's reporting on PR has been simply horrendous. Every east European election held this spring has used PR, but I have yet to see a single explanation of PR in any media report on eastern Europe. Ironically, the only significant coverage PR has received has been in relation to Israel's current political crisis. Israel's extreme PR system of representing any party that receives 1% of the vote has indeed helped fragment the government, but its political crisis is much more due to strong divisions within the country than an electoral system used for decades in such stable countries as Sweden, Switzerland and the Netherlands. PR-bashers would do well to ask if Israel would be more democratic if supporters of the religious parties did not vote, as is true of so much of the U.S.'s population. They should ask whether depriving minority populations of voices would result in any lasting consensus. They should think about why exclusion from the political process is ultimately more divisive than the more overt disunity of multiple parties.

ISN'T OUR SYSTEM THE MOST DEMOCRATIC?

The 1988 Canadian elections demonstrate how our "winner-take-all" approach actually can be quite undemocratic. The ruling Conservative Party successfully defined the elections as a referendum on a prospective free trade agreement with the U.S. The opposition won well over 50 percent of the vote, thus "winning" the referendum, yet the Conservatives gained a comfortable majority of seats because the opposition vote was split between two parties. After the elections, the free trade agreement was quickly passed.

Such twisted results rarely occur in federal elections in the United States only because few races have more than two candidates — unfortunately due to voters' understandable fears that a third party candidate would split the vote and cause the defeat of the less objectionable major party candidate. Nevertheless, striking examples of elections failing to reflect the will of the voters exist: Democratic candidates in Indiana congressional elections polled 45% of the vote in both 1912 and 1918, but won 12 of 13 seats one year and 0 of 13 the next — simply because in 1912 Teddy Roosevelt's Progressive Party split the Republican vote.

WHY DOES OUR ELECTORAL SYSTEM STIFLE DEBATE ON CRITICAL ISSUES?

Elections ground any democracy. They determine the "consent of the governed" by placing in offices of responsibility representatives of the people's will. Yet today candidates in the U.S. often avoid taking stands on controversial issues until it is obvious that a majority will support their position, resulting in a government-by-polling that is an utter failure on complex, counter-intuitive issues.

The dangerous lag between awareness of a problem and political action on it will not change until politicians have the security to address controversial issues when only a minority of their constituents seek that the problem be addressed — something that won't happen without PR. Until then, candidates will strive to win over the mythical center rather than take the risk of alienating the majority by directly speaking for any single "special interest" — a problem because special interests as a whole make up the entire population and often voice issues that demand public debate and political action.

IS PR CONSTITUTIONAL?

In the majority Supreme Court opinion in a landmark case on re-apportionment, the justices wrote "The basic principle of representative government remains, and must remain unchanged — the weight of a citizen's vote cannot be made to depend on where he lives." Today, of course, when gerrymandering results in districts being "safe" for one party and whole blocks of voters thus being written off, the weight of citizens' votes can depend very much on where they live.

PR in fact being closer to the spirit of the Constitution than a winner-take-all system. PR checks abuses by majorities easily magnified by winner-take-all systems that leave large segments of the population unrepresented. PR not only means "one adult, one vote;" it means "one adult, one vote that counts." The majority still rules, of course, as the majority wins a majority of elected positions, but minorities become an institutional part of the decision-making process.

HOW MIGHT PR BE USED AT THE STATE AND LOCAL LEVELS?

In the first half of this century, PR was used in 22 U.S. cities, including New York City, Cincinatti, Sacramento and Cleveland. (It was repealed in most cities during the anti-communist hysteria of the post World War II era — New York elected two communists to its 23-member city council in 1945.) The fact that PR worked in New York at a time when its population was greater than all but three states points to the practicality of states using PR to elect a single house legislature.

The logic for PR is the same for local elections as national ones. The history of U.S. cities using PR would make it easier to institute at a local level than at the national level, as precedents exist for writing laws and charters. In addition, the fact that several universities use PR to elect their student government should lead The Evergreen State College to think about PR in its current attempt to structure representation for diverse cultural groups in its student government.

> Recent studies of different electoral systems reveal that every single country with PR has a higher percentage of women (who are not a minority of the population but are everywhere under-represented in elected offices — the U.S. Senate has only two women out of its 100 members) in office than the average for non-PR countries; in one intriguing specific comparison, the half of the German parliament elected by PR has several times as many women as the half elected from single-member districts.

WOULD PR SOLVE ALL OUR PROBLEMS?

PR encompasses a whole spectrum of methods of electing representatives. Any movement across this spectrum from the U.S.'s position on the far winner-take-all end likely would dramatically enliven our political process, although structural reforms can only guarantee opportunities for change, not the change itself. PR of course is not the answer to all of our political problems, but would be a powerful reform because it goes directly to the heart of the democratic process. We need to remember that democracy is what goes on up to voters marking ballots; after voting comes government, which does not require elections. To enliven democracy, we need to look at electoral systems.

For those interested in learning more about PR or join the ongoing effort to institute it here in Thurston County, contact Robert Richie at 459-5590 or Teresa Jennings at 456-0451.

I agree with it in theory...

The idea is good. A grassroots organization that represents the people that the two big political parties try to ignore: peace activists, people of color, people who believe in equality of the sexes, union members, environmentalists, gays and lesbians, and other community oriented activists. An organization that supports and encourages progressive electoral candidates, without selling it's souls for "political expediancy." An organization that doesn't depend on business handouts, and therefore is free to attack the corporate welfare state. An organization that networks, that knows what it believes in and works with others who have the same goals.

Still, it's a bit idealistic. I mean, to expect a small collection of do-gooders with their heart in the right place to make any difference is, well, unrealistic. I mean, there's been a need for this kind of organization for a long time, but no one has successfully gotten it off the ground, and there's no reason to expect this time it will be any different. And will they be able to marshal the resources and people-power to achieve any of their lofty goals?

I decided not to take any chances.

I joined the Thurston County Rainbow Coalition, sent them some money, and started getting involved.

☐ Yes, I'm interested in joining the Thurston County Rainbow Coalition. Enclosed is ☐ $5 ☐ $10 ☐ $25 ☐ $50 ☐ $ _____ toward my membership.

☐ Yes, I want to join the Thurston County Rainbow Coalition, but I can't afford to send any money. Make me a member anyway.

☐ No, I'm not interested in joining at this time, but please put me on your mailing list.

☐ Enclosed is $20. Please subscribe me for one year to this newspaper. **(Note: Subscription is not included with membership.)**

_____ *(name)*

_____ *(address)*

_____ *(city)* _____ *(zip code)*

_____ *(work phone)* _____ *(home phone)*

_____ *(Special Interests (e.g. labor, affirmative action, etc.)*

Send to:
Thurston County Rainbow Coalition, P.O. Box 295, Olympia WA 98507. For information call 352-1877

Places To Go This Month Dept.

4 – Monday
9:30am. Earth First! and Human Damage Control-sponsored demonstration / funeral at Animal Control to protest animal rights violations. **Meet at Yard Birds**. CONTACT: Harry or Grace 357-8323.

6:30pm. Meeting of No Sweat, a global warming action group. **SPEECH**. CONTACT: Rhys 352-4932.

7pm. Meeting of Nisqually Delta Association to discuss current threats to the Nisqually Delta. **Nisqually Reach Nature Center**. CONTACT: Mary 459-0596.

7pm. Public hearing in Rainier on where residents' garbage will go after July 1, when a Centralia landfill no longer will take out-of-county garbage. CONTACT: 472-8951.

5 – Tuesday
Noon. Meeting of Advisory Committee for LOTT on Cascade Pole cleanup.

7pm. The REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS COALITION meets at the Olympia commmunity Center, Room 103. For more information call Roxette Busani at 438-1382.

7pm. Public hearing on draft plan for management of moderate risk waste (paints, solvents, pesticides, cleaners) in Thurston County. Copies of plan at SPEECH and local libraries. **Olympia Center, Room 101.** CONTACT: Michael or Marie 786-5457.

6 – Wednesday
6pm. Thurston County Freeholders meeting to discuss potential charter policy statements. **Olympia City Hall.**

7:30pm. Forum with 7 panelists on spotted owl and potential impact on timber industry of cutbacks in harvest levels. **Corbet Hall, Centralia College**. CONTACT: Lewis Co. Economic Develop. Council 748-0114.

9 – Saturday
9-11am. Composting for Kids workshop. **Dirt Works**. CONTACT: Olympia Parks/ Recreation Dept. 753-8380.

9 - Saturday *continued*
9am-1pm. Pasture management workshop for livestock owners on how to have more healthy, productive weed free pastures. **South Bay Grange Hall**. CONTACT Laura, Thurston Co. Conservation Dist. 754-3588.

11 – Monday
7:30pm. Meeting of Earth First! **SPEECH.** CONTACT: 753-8323.

12 - Tuesday
9pm. Fellowship of Reconcilliation Television Program - "Human Rights in Tibet" - TCTV, Channel 31. Repeats Sunday the 17th at 11 am and Tuesday the 19th at 9pm.

13 – Wednesday
5:30pm. Black Hills Audubon board meeting, open to members. CONTACT: Susan Markey 586-8600.

5:30pm. Thurston County Freeholders meeting with Intercity Transit Board. **IT Headquarters, 526 Pattison.**

14 – Thursday
7:30pm. Black Hills Audubon membership meeting. **211 West 21st St.** CONTACT: Susan Markey 586-8600.

15 – Friday
5-7pm SPEECH Open House. Enjoy refreshments, see what SPEECH is doing, and meet other members of Thurston County's environmental community.

16 – Saturday
10am-4pm. Yard waste collection: grass, leaves, brush up to 6" diameter, 8' max. length.. **Behind Olympia City Hall.** CONTACT: Dirt Works 753-8360.

3-5 pm. THURSTON COUNTY RAINBOW COALITION Genenral Membership Meeting at the First Christian Church (7th & Franklin, Olympia). For information call Todd at 352-1877. This is an open meeting.

All day. Sierra Club outing to Mt. Rainier. 12 mile hike to Indian Henry's, moderate to difficult terrain. CONTACT: Rick Moore 586-3127.

16/17 – Saturday/Sunday
Tree-climbing workshop in Olympia. Call SPEECH for more info.

18 – Monday
9am. County commissioners meeting. **Thurston County Courthouse, Bldg. #1.** Call their office at 786-5440 to urge them to have the county purchase recycled paper products.

6:30pm. No Sweat meeting. **SPEECH.** CONTACT: Rhys 357-4932.

7pm. Rainier town council meeting on where to take town's garbage. CONTACT: 472-8951.

19 - Tuesday
7pm. WORKS IN PROGRESS EDITORIAL BOARD MEETING. Nothing else is happening today so there is no excuse not to show up. For more information call Sylvia at 459-3625. (I.E., "Where are we meeting?")

20 – Wednesday
6pm. Thurston County Freeholders meeting. **Olympia City Hall.**

7pm. Sensible Growth Coalition general membership meeting. **SPEECH.** CONTACT: Jerry Parker 754-5747.

21 – Thursday
7pm. SPEECH volunteer potluck. **SPEECH.** CONTACT: Ann Butler 357-6813.

6:30 pm. F.O.R. POTLUCK PICNIC at the Rose Garden Kitchen in Priest Point Park. For information call Glen at 491-9093.

22 - Friday
8pm. THURSTON COUNTY RAINBOW COALITION Steering Committee Meeting. For location and other information, call Todd at 352-1877. This is an open meeting.

22/23 – Friday/Saturday
All day, both days. Nisqually Rediscovery Voyage. Overnight trip on Pure Sound Society's traditional wooden longboats from Steilacoom to Nisqually Reach Nature Center. CONTACT: 459-0387.

23 – Saturday
9-11am. Home Food Composting workshop. **Dirt Works**. CONTACT: Olympia Parks/ Recreation 753-8380.

10am. Solar water hearing workshop **Energy Outreach Center.** CONTACT: Lyle 943-4595.

24 – Sunday
2-4pm. Seafood Fest with Jolene Unsoeld and Rep. George Miller (CA) in Olympia. CONTACT: Michael Kent 352-7135.

25 – Monday
1-4pm. Start of TESC summer session class "The End of Nature? Examining the Challenge," taught by Bruce Walton. CONTACT: 866-6000, x6312.

26 – Tuesday
5:30pm. Sierra Club / Audubon Joint Conservation Meeting. **Olympia Library.** CONTACT: Susan Markey 586-8600.

7pm. Greens of Olympia open circle / orientation meeting. **Olympia Library.** CONTACT: Bob or Helen 866-2278.

7pm. Puget Sound Water Authority releases 1991 Draft Management Plan for public comment. Copy of plan at SPEECH. John L. O'Brien Bldg. Hearing Rm B, Capitol Campus. CONTACT: PSWA 464-7320.

29th through the 2nd of July
Annual Fellowship of Reconcilliation Converence at Seabeck. "DEEPENING THE ROOTS: Nonviolence Theory and Practice" For more information contact Glen Anderson at 491-9093.

Submissions to Works in Progress are due at the end of the 3rd week of each month. Send your items to WIP c/o Thurston County Rainbow Coalition, P.O. Box 295, Olympia, WA 98507.

Join Jolene and special guest

Congressman George Miller (CA)

for an afternoon of music, fun & food

Sunday, June 24, 2 - 4 p.m.

at the home of Ward and Alice Miles
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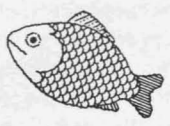

$35 per person
RSVP: 357-7007

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